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THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(AUTHORISED EDITION)

For Session 1899.

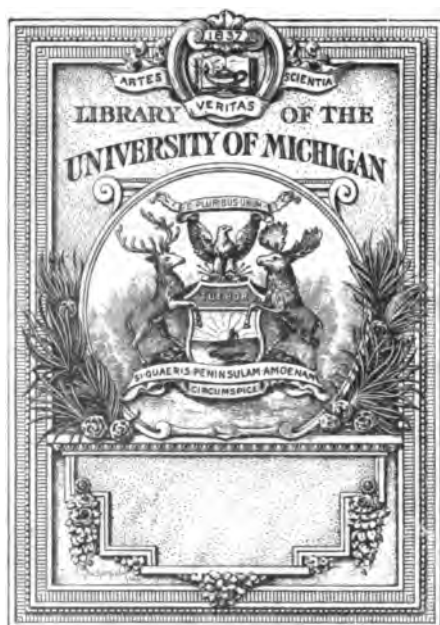
EIGHTH VOLUME OF SESSION.

(CONTAINING THE
DEBATES OF BOTH HOUSES FROM THE TWENTY-FOURTH JUNE
TO THE FIFTH JULY.)



PRINTED AND PUBLISHED
BY ORDER AND WITH THE SANCTION OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS
BY
WYMAN AND SONS, LIMITED, FETTER LANE, LONDON.

LONDON



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THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(AUTHORISED EDITION),

FOURTH SERIES. ⁸⁷⁷⁵⁸

COMMENCING WITH THE FIFTH SESSION OF THE TWENTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT

OF THE

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

62 VICTORIÆ.

VOLUME LXXIII,

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM

THE TWENTIETH DAY OF JUNE

TO

THE FIFTH DAY OF JULY

1899.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED,

UNDER CONTRACT WITH HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE

BY

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1899.

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---	---

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--	---

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On Question, agreed to.

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Clause 7 :—

Amendment proposed—

“In page 4, line 31, to leave out all the words from the beginning of the clause to the word ‘after,’ in line 32.”—(*Mr. Thomas Shaw.*)

Question again proposed, “That the words proposed to be left out, stand part of the clause.”

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Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 206 ; Noes, 140. (Division List, No. 201.)

Amendment proposed—

“In page 5, line 10, to leave out Sub-section (2), and insert, ‘(2) No order so made shall be of any validity unless it has been confirmed by Parliament ; and the Secretary for Scotland shall, so soon as conveniently may be, submit such order to Parliament in a Bill (hereinafter referred to as a Confirmation Bill), and such Bill, after introduction, shall be deemed to have passed through all its stages up to and including Committee, and shall be ordered to be considered in either House as if reported from a Committee. When such Bill has been read a third time in the first House of Parliament the like proceedings shall, subject to Standing Orders, be taken in the second House of Parliament. Any Act passed to confirm such Order shall be deemed to be a public Act of Parliament.’”—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

Amendment agreed to.

Other Amendments made.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 8 :—

Amendments made.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 9 :—

Amendment proposed—

“In page 6, line 24, to leave out from ‘shall,’ to end of sub-section, and insert ‘so far as it relates to the matter petitioned against, be referred to a Select Committee, or, if the two Houses of Parliament think fit so to order, to a Joint Committee of such Houses, and the petitioner shall be allowed to appear and oppose, as in the case of a Private Bill.’”—(*Mr. Cripps.*)

Question proposed, “That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause.”

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DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. A. G. Murray</i> ...	94	<i>Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis)</i> .	95
<i>Mr. Bryce</i> ...	94	<i>Mr. Cripps</i> ...	96
<i>Sir F. S. Powell (Wigan)</i> ...	94	<i>Mr. Caldwell (Lanark, Mid)</i> ...	97
<i>Dr. Clark</i> ...	95		

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment proposed—

“In page 6, line 24, after ‘referred,’ to insert ‘together with the evidence taken before the Commissioners.’”—(*Mr. Renshaw.*)

Question proposed, “That those words be there inserted.”

<i>Mr. A. G. Murray</i> ...	97
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Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Question proposed, “That Clause 9, as amended, stand part of the Bill.”

<i>Mr. Thomas Shaw</i> ...	97
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Question put, and agreed to.

Clauses 10 and 11 agreed to.

Clause 12 :—

Amendment proposed—

“In page 7, line 29, after ‘such,’ to insert ‘legal assessors.’”—(*Mr. Renshaw.*)

Question proposed, “That those words be there inserted.”

<i>Mr. A. G. Murray</i> ...	98
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Question put, and negatived.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 13 agreed to.

Clause 14 :—

<i>Mr. Dalziel (Kirkcaldy Burghs)</i> ...	98
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Clause agreed to.

Clause 15 :—

Amendment proposed—

“In page 8, line 9, after ‘Provisional Orders,’ to insert, ‘provided that such scale of fees shall be framed with regard to the expenses actually incurred under this Act in connection therewith.’”—(*Sir John Leng.*)

Question proposed, “That those words be there inserted.”

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Dr. Clark</i> ...	99	<i>Sir John Leng</i> ...	101
<i>Mr. A. G. Murray</i> ...	100	<i>Dr. Clark</i> ...	101

Question put, and negatived.

Clause agreed to.

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Clause 16 :—

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<i>Captain Sinclair (Forfarshire)</i>	101	<i>Mr. A. G. Murray</i>	101
<i>Mr. A. G. Murray</i>	...	<i>Captain Sinclair...</i>	102
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Clause agreed to.

Clause 17 :—

Amendment proposed—

“In page 9, line 19, omit from ‘person’ to ‘entitled.’”—(*Mr. A. G. Murray.*)

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 17, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 18 :—

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. Dalziel</i>	102	<i>Mr. A. G. Murray</i>	102
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Clause agreed to.

New clause :—

“If any objection to any draft Order is made to the Secretary for Scotland, or to the Chairmen, on the ground that the undertaking proposed to be authorised by the Order will destroy or injure any building or other object of historical interest, or will injuriously affect any natural scenery, the Chairmen shall consider such objection, and may either report to the Secretary for Scotland that such objection raises an issue or issues which ought to be dealt with by Private Bill and not by Provisional Order, or may refer such objection to the Commissioners, who shall give to those by whom it is made a proper opportunity of being heard in support of it”—(*Mr. Bryce*);

brought up, and read the first time.

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. A. G. Murray</i>	...	103	<i>Mr. Bryce</i>	103
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Clause, as amended, agreed to, and added to the Bill.

Bill reported; as amended, to be considered upon Monday next, and to be printed. (No. 244.)

Electric Lighting (Clauses) Bill—[SECOND READING]—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, “That the Bill be now read a Second time.”

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. Bryce (Aberdeen, S.)</i>	...	103	<i>The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Ritchie, Croydon)</i>	...	103
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Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read the second time, and committed for To-morrow.

Telegraphs (Telephonic Communication, &c.) Bill—[SECOND READING.]—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, “That the Bill be now read a second time.”—(*Mr. Hanbury.*)

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Mr. W. F. Lawrence (Liverpool, Abercromby)... .. 157

It being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

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Amendment proposed—

“In page 1, line 10, to leave out from the word ‘tenant,’ to the word ‘notwithstanding,’ in line 11.”—(*Sir Charles Dilke.*)

Question proposed, “That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill.”

Debate arising, and it being after Midnight, and objection being taken to further proceeding, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

COUNTY COURT OFFICERS IN IRELAND (CLERICAL ASSISTANCE).—Return presented,—relative thereto [ordered 20th June ; *Mr. Hanbury*], to lie upon the Table 159

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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.—On the motion for the adjournment of the House—Questions, Mr. Buchanan (Aberdeenshire, E.), and Mr. Havelock Wilson (Middlesbrough) ; Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 159

Adjourned at ten minutes after Twelve of the clock.

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Colonial and Foreign Banks Guarantee Fund Bill [Lords]—As amended, considered ; to be read the third time	161
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Local Government Provisional Orders (Gas) Bill ; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill ; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 11) Bill ; Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill —As amended, considered ; to be read the third time To-morrow ...	161
PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP L) —Ordered, That Frederic Steevens do attend the said Committee on Group L of Private Bills upon Monday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock	161
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MILITARY WORKS (MONEY)—Considered in Committee.

Motion made, and Question proposed—

“That it is expedient to authorise the issue out of the Consolidated Fund, in addition to the sum authorised by the Military Works Loan Act of 1897, a further sum of £4,000,000, which may be required for defence works, barracks, rifle ranges, and staff and contingencies.”—(*Mr. Wyndham.*)

DISCUSSION :—

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<i>The First Lord of the</i> <i>Admiralty (Mr. Goschen,</i> <i>St. George's, Hanover</i> <i>Square)</i>	178	<i>Mr. Wyndham</i>	195
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		<i>Mr. Warner</i>	217
		<i>Mr. Galloway (Manchester, S.W.)</i>	217
		<i>Mr. Maddison (Sheffield, Bright-</i> <i>side)</i>	217

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 241 ; Noes, 66. (Division List, No. 202.)

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the issue, out of the Consolidated Fund, in addition to the sums authorised by the Military Works Act, 1897, of such further sums, not exceeding in the whole £4,000,000, as may be required for defraying the cost of certain military works and services, such sums to be raised in manner provided by the said Act.

Resolution to be reported To-morrow.

Telegraphs (Telephonic Communication, etc.) Bill—Order read, for resuming adjourned Debate on Question [20th June], “That the Bill be read a second time.”

Question again proposed. Debate resumed.

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<i>The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.)</i> ...	222	<i>Mr. Caldwell (Lanark, Mid)</i> ...	224
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		<i>Sir John Lubbock (London University)</i> ...	226
		<i>Mr. Bartley (Islington, N.)</i> ...	226

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed—"That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, &c."—(*Mr. Balfour.*)

Debate arising.

Debate adjourned until Monday next.

Inebriates Act (1898) Amendment Bill—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed—"That the Bill be now read a second time."

<i>Mr. Caldwell (Lanark, Mid)</i> ...	227
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It being half-past Five of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

QUARRIES—Bill to apply the provisions of the Law relating to the weighing of minerals contracted to be gotten in coal and ironstone mines to certain quarries, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Alfred Pease, Mr. John Wilson, Mr. Atherley-Jones, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. Richardson, and Mr. Joseph Pease ... 227

Quarries Bill—"To apply the provisions of the law relating to the weighing of minerals to be gotten in coal and ironstone mines to certain quarries," presented accordingly, and read the first time: to be read a second time upon Monday, 3rd July, and to be printed. (Bill 245.) ... 228

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On the Motion for the Adjournment of the House.

CLERICAL TITHES BILL—Question, Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.); Answer, The Secretary to the Treasury (Sir W. Walrond, Devon, Tiverton) ... 228

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PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

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STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE —Report from, that the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the London and North-Western Railway (Additional Powers) Bill ought to be dispensed with, and the Bill allowed to proceed ; read and agreed to	229
London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Bill ; Great Central Railway Bill ; Hastings Harbour Bill [Lords]—Reported, with Amendments ...	229
Aire and Calder Navigation Bill —Report from the Select Committee, that the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, no parties having appeared in opposition thereto ; read, and ordered to lie on the Table ; the orders made on the 8th of June and Friday last discharged ; and Bill committed for To-morrow	229
Sheffield Corporation Markets Bill ; City and Brixton Railway Bill —Read the second time, and committed	229
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Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 13) Bill [Lords]—Read the third time (according to Order), and passed, and sent to the Commons ...	230
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GREENWICH OBSERVATORY —Report of the Astronomer Royal to the Board of Visitors of the Royal Observatory, Greenwich, read at the annual visitation of the Royal Observatory, 3rd June, 1899 ...	232
SCIENCE AND ART DEPARTMENT —Directory for the year 1899; with regulations for establishing and conducting science and art schools and classes. Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table... ..	232
ELECTRIC LIGHTING ACTS, 1882 to 1890 (PROCEEDINGS) —Report by the Board of Trade respecting the applications to and proceedings of the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 to 1890, during the past year: Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table ...	232

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Poor Law Acts Amendment Bill [Lords]—A Bill to amend Section 1 of the Poor Law Act, 1889, Section 4 of the Poor Law (Apprentices, &c.) Act, 1851, and Section 4 of the Pauper Inmates Discharge and Regulation Act, 1871—Was presented by the Lord Harris; read the first time; to be printed; and to be read the second time on Thursday next. (No. 132) ... 232

Fine or Imprisonment (Scotland and Ireland) Bill—SECOND READING.—Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

Moved that the Bill be read the second time.—(*The Earl of Jersey*.)

The Lord Chancellor of Ireland (Lord Ashbourne)... .. 233

On Question, agreed to.

Bill read the second time (according to Order), and committed to a Committee of the whole House To-morrow.

Isolation Hospitals (Amendment) Bill [Lords]—COMMITTEE—House in Committee (according to Order)

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2 :—

Amendment moved—

“In page 2, line 2, after ‘Board’ to insert ‘Provided that no sanction in pursuance of this section shall be given by the Local Government Board unless the Board are satisfied that adequate accommodation for hospital purposes has been or will be provided for the use of the inhabitants of the district for which the hospital to be transferred was provided; provided also that all moneys which become payable to a district council or a joint board in respect of a transfer in pursuance of this section shall be applied in such manner as the Local Government Board direct either in repayment of any loan of the district council or joint board, or for any other purpose for which capital moneys may be applied.’”
(*The Earl of Lichfield*.)

Lord Harris 234

Amendment agreed to.

Other Amendments made; Bill recommitted to the Standing Committee, and to be printed as amended. (No. 133.)

Manchester Canonries Bill [Lords.]—SECOND READING.—Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Moved, “That the Bill be now read the second time.”—(*The Lord Bishop of Manchester*.)

Lord Egerton of Tatton 237

On Question agreed to,

Bill read the second time (according to Order), and committed to a Committee of the whole House on Monday next.

Trawlers' Certificates Suspension Bill [Lords]—[THIRD READING]—Order of the Day for the Third Reading read.

Moved, “That the Bill be now read the third time.”—(*The Earl of Camperdown*.)

Amendment moved—

“To leave out ‘now’ and add at the end of the Motion ‘this day three months.’”—(*The Lord Heneage*.)

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Anchors and Chain Cables Bill —House in Committee (according to Order): Amendments made. Standing Committee negatived: the Report of Amendments to be received on Monday next; and Bill to be printed as amended. (No. 134.)	<i>... .. 246</i>
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Reformatory Schools Amendment Bill [Lords]—Read the third time (according to Order.)

Amendment moved—

“In Clause 1, line 14, to leave out from ‘Provided that’ to ‘addition’ inclusive, line 16, and insert, ‘No such offender shall, except in what the court considers an aggravated case.’”—(*The Lord Norton.*)

DISCUSSION :—

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<i>Lord Norton</i>	<i>... 247</i>		

Amendment negatived.

Bill passed, and sent to the Commons.

Commons and Open Spaces Bill—[SECOND READING]—Order of the Day for the Second Reading read—(*Lord Burghclere.*)

Moved, That the Bill be now read the second time.

DISCUSSION :—

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<i>The Earl of Kimberley</i>	<i>... 254</i>		

On Question, agreed to.

Bill read the second time (according to Order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House.

QUESTIONS.

STATUE OF MR. CANNING.

DISCUSSION :—

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PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 14) Bill.

DISCUSSION :—

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Mr. James Lowther (Kent, Thanet) 259
Mr. T. W. Russell (Tyrone, S.) 259

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All Saints' Church (Cardiff) Bill [Lords]—(By Order)—Read a second time and committed... .. 259

Local Government Provisional Orders (Gas) Bill ; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill ; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 11) Bill ; Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill—Read the third time and passed 259

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill—As amended, considered ; to be read the third time To-morrow 260

BURGH POLICE (SCOTLAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER—Bill to confirm a Provisional Order under the Burgh Police (Scotland) Act, 1892, relating to Paisley Corporation Gas Supply, ordered to be brought in by the Lord Advocate and Mr. Anstruther. Ordered, That Standing Order 193A be suspended, and that the Bill be read the first time.—(*The Lord Advocate*)... 260

Burgh Police (Scotland) Provisional Order Bill—"To confirm a Provisional Order under the Burgh Police (Scotland) Act, 1892, relating to Paisley Corporation Gas Supply," presented accordingly, and read the first time ; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. (Bill 246) 260

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP L)—Ordered, That Frederick Steevens do attend the said Committee on Group L of Private Bills upon Monday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock, and produce the said documents 260

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Warrington Corporation Bill—Reported from the Select Committee on Police and Sanitary Regulations Bills, with Amendments. Report and Special Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 261

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Menstone Water Bill—Reported, with Amendments. Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed... .. 261

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS—That they have agreed to Amendment to Friends' Provident Institution Bill [Lords]. Amendments to Skipton Urban District Gas Bill [Lords], without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under The Tramways Act, 1870, relating to Aberdeen Corporation Tramways, Devonport Corporation Tramways, Halifax Corporation Tramways, Matlock Urban District Tramways, Perth and District Tramways, and Reading Corporation Tramways." [Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill. [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act for conferring further powers on the Glasgow and South-Western Railway Company; for the construction of works and the acquisition of lands; for vesting in them the undertakings of the Largs Harbour Company and the Kilmarnock and Troon Railway Company; for making provision with reference to the election of Rothesay Harbour Trustees; for empowering the Company to raise additional capital; and for other purposes." [Glasgow and South-Western Railway Bill. [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to empower the Wolverhampton Tramways Company, Limited, to alter the gauge of certain of their tramways, and to work the same by mechanical power; and for other purposes." [Wolverhampton Tramways Bill [Lords]

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Tithe Rent-charge (Rates) Bill—Motion made, and Question proposed, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the law with respect to the Payment of Rates on Tithe Rent-charge attached to a Benefice."—*(Mr. Long.)*

DISCUSSION :—

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Question put, "That the Debate be now adjourned."

The House divided—Ayes, 162; Noes, 243. (Division List, No. 203.)

Original Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 247; Noes, 169. (Division List, No. 204.)

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Long and Mr. Solicitor-General.

Tithe Rent-charge (Rates) Bill—"To amend the Law with respect to the Payment of Rates on Tithe Rent-charge attached to a Benefice," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. (Bill 242.) 305

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SUPPLY [15TH ALLOTTED DAY]—Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CIVIL SERVICES ESTIMATES, 1899–1900.

CLASS III.

Motion made, and Question proposed—

"That a sum, not exceeding £39,896, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, for Criminal Prosecutions and other Law Charges in Ireland."

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Motion made, and Question proposed—

"That a sum, not exceeding £29,895, be granted for the said services."—
(*Mr. Davitt.*)

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The Committee divided : Ayes, 95 ; Noes, 147. (Division List, No. 205.)

Original Question again proposed.

DISCUSSION :—

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Question put, and agreed to.

Resolution to be reported.

CLASS II.

Motion made, and Question proposed—

"That a sum, not exceeding £27,479, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Local Government Board in Ireland."

DISCUSSION :—

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Resolution to be reported To-morrow ; Committee also report Progress ; to sit again To-morrow.

MILITARY WORKS (MONEY)—Resolution reported—

"That it is expedient to authorise the issue, out of the Consolidated Fund, in addition to the sums authorised by the Military Works Act, 1897, of such further sums, not exceeding in the whole £4,000,000, as may be required for defraying the cost of certain Military Works and Services, such sums to be raised in manner provided by the said Act."

Resolution agreed to.

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Military Works Bill —"To make further provision for defraying the expenses of certain Military Works and other Military Services," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a Second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. (Bill 249.)... ..	368
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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—QUESTIONS ON THE MOTION FOR THE ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE —Questions, Mr. Caldwell (Lanark, Mid), and Sir Wilfrid Lawson (Cumberland, Cockermouth); Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.)	368

Adjourned at five minutes after Twelve of the clock.

LORDS: FRIDAY, 23RD JUNE 1899.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Derby Corporation Tramways, &c.; Walker and Wallsend Union Gas (Electric Lighting); Lowestoft Promenade Pier	369
Also, the Certificate that no Standing Orders are applicable to the following Bill:—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5)	369
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And, also, the Certificates that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 18); Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 19); Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 1); London County Council (Money.) The same were ordered to lie on the Table	369
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Great Western Railway Bill —Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table; the Orders made on the 9th of May and Thursday last discharged; and Bill committed	370

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Milton Creek Conservancy Bill —Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table: the Orders made on the 8th of June and Thursday last discharged; and Bill committed	370
Central London Railway Bill —Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table; the Orders made on the 9th of May and the 12th instant discharged; and Bill committed	370
Fishguard Water and Gas Bill —Reported, with Amendments	370
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Belfast and Northern Counties Railway Bill —The Queen's Consent signified, and Bill reported, without Amendment	370
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Edinburgh Corporation Bill; Wetherby District Water Bill; South-Eastern Railway Bill —Read the third time, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons	371
Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill —Brought from the Commons; read the first time, to be printed, and referred to the Examiners. (No. 144)	371
Derwent Valley Water Bill; Harrow and Uxbridge Railway Bill; Ionian Bank Bill; London, Walthamstow and Epping Forest Bill; Worcestershire County Council Bill —Brought from the Commons; read the first time; and referred to the Examiners... ..	372

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The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (The Earl of Selborne) ... 391

Elementary Education (Defective and Epileptic Children) Bill [Lords]
—SECOND READING—Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read the second time."—(*The Duke of Devonshire.*)

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Lord Reay</i> ...	397	<i>Lord Kinnaird</i> ...	398
<i>Earl Egerton</i> ...	398		

On Question, agreed to.

Bill read the second time [according to Order], and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next.

Fine or Imprisonment (Scotland and Ireland) Bill—House in Committee [according to Order] ; Bill reported, without Amendment ; and re-committed to the Standing Committee ... 399

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes after Six of the clock.

COMMONS: FRIDAY, 23RD JUNE 1899.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [Lords]—(NO STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO APPLICABLE)—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders not previously inquired into are applicable, viz : Brooke's Park (Londonderry) Bill [Lords]. Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time ... 399

Cardiff Railway Bill ; Rhondda Urban District Council Bill—Lords Amendments considered, and agreed to ... 399

Hastings and St. Leonards Gas Bill [Lords]—Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments ... 399

Barton-on-Sea Water Bill [Lords]—As amended, considered ; to be read the third time... 399

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Lanarkshire (Middle Ward District) Water Bill [Lords]—As amended, considered; to be read the third time ... 400

Worcestershire County Council Bill—Ordered, That, in the case of the Worcestershire County Council Bill, Standing Orders 84, 214, 215, and 239 be suspended, and that the Bill be now taken into consideration provided amended prints shall have been previously deposited.—(*Dr. Farquharson.*) Bill, as amended, considered accordingly. Ordered, That Standing Orders 223 and 243 be suspended, and that the Bill be now read the third time.—(*Dr. Farquharson.*) Bill read the third time accordingly, and passed ... 400

Ionian Bank Bill—Ordered, That in the case of the Ionian Bank Bill, Standing Orders 84, 214, 215, and 239 be suspended, and that the Bill be now taken into consideration provided amended prints shall have been previously deposited.—(*Dr. Farquharson.*) Bill, as amended, considered accordingly. Ordered, That Standing Orders 223 and 243 be suspended, and that the Bill be now read the third time.—(*Dr. Farquharson.*) Bill read the third time accordingly, and passed... 400

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Harrow and Uxbridge Railway Bill—Ordered, That, in the case of the Harrow and Uxbridge Railway Bill, Standing Orders 84, 214, 215, and 239 be suspended, and that the Bill be now taken into consideration provided amended prints shall have been previously deposited.—(*Dr. Farquharson.*) Bill, as amended, considered accordingly. Ordered, That Standing Orders 223 and 243 be suspended, and that the Bill be now read the third time.—(*Dr. Farquharson.*) Bill read the third time accordingly, and passed ... 401

Kingscourt, Keady, and Armagh Railway Bill (By Order)—Motion for Re-committal.

Motion made, and Question proposed—

"That the Kingscourt, Keady, and Armagh Railway Bill be re-committed to the former Committee."—(*Mr. T. M. Healy.*)

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PUBLIC BUSINESS.

SUPPLY [14TH ALLOTTED DAY]—Considered in Committee.

CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES, 1899-1900.

CLASS IV.

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"That a sum, not exceeding £2,450, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, for a Grant in Aid of the Expenses of the Queen's Colleges in Ireland."

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It being Midnight, the Chairman left the chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress ; to sit again upon Monday next.

SUPPLY [22ND JUNE]—Resolution reported.

CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES, 1899-1900.

CLASS III.

“That a sum, not exceeding £39,895, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, for Criminal Prosecutions and other Law Charges in Ireland.”

Resolution agreed to.

Lincolnshire Coroners Bill [Lords]—Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 :—

Committee report Progress ; to sit again upon Monday next.

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Stockport Corporation Bill—To be read the second time on Monday next 529

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Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [Lords]; Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 3) Bill [Lords]—House to be in Committee To-morrow	531
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LAND REGISTRY—Account of receipts and payments in respect of the Land Registry for the year ended 31st March, 1899	533
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<i>The Earl of Wemyss</i>	534
<i>Lord Muskerry</i>	534

Order for Second Reading discharged.

QUESTION.

MAIL STEAMER CONTRACTS—Question, Lord Kelvin; Answer, The Postmaster-General (The Duke of Norfolk)	534
LONDON GOVERNMENT BILL—COMMITTEE—House in Committee (according to Order).	
Clause 1 agreed to.	
Clause 2 :—	
Amendment moved—	
"Page 1, line 19, leave out from 'councillors' to the end of the sub-section, and insert, 'Provided that no woman shall be eligible for any such office.'—(<i>The Lord Kenry, E. Dunraven and Mount Earl.</i>)	

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On Question, "Whether the words proposed to be left out shall stand part of the clause," their Lordships divided :—Contents, 68 ; Not-Contents, 182.

Amendment moved—

"In page 2, line 1, leave out Sub-section (4) and insert the following Sub-sections :

'(4)—(i.) The aldermen shall be fit persons elected by the council from among persons qualified to be London county councillors, provided that women, whether married or single, shall, if otherwise qualified, be eligible for election.

'(ii.) If a councillor is elected to and accepts the office of alderman, he vacates his office of councillor.

'(iii.) The term of office of an alderman shall be six years.

'(iv.) On the ordinary day of election of alderman in every third year, one-half of the whole number of aldermen shall go out of office, and their places shall be filled by election.

'(v.) The half to go out shall be those who have been aldermen for the longest time without re-election.

'(5)—(i.) The mayor of a metropolitan borough shall be a fit person elected by the council from among the aldermen or councillors, or persons qualified to be such, provided that a woman shall not be a mayor.

'(ii.) An outgoing alderman is eligible.

'(iii.) The term of office of a mayor shall be one year, but he shall continue in office until his successor has accepted office, and made and subscribed the required declaration.

'(iv.) He shall, by virtue of his office, be a justice of the peace for the County of London, but before acting as such justice he shall, if he has not already done so, take the oaths required by law to be taken by a justice of the peace other than the oath respecting qualification by estate.

'(v.) Sections 60 and 61 of the Municipal Corporations Act, 1882, shall apply to the election of aldermen and mayors under this Act, provided that aldermen shall not as such vote at the election of an alderman.'—*The Lord Tweedmouth.*)

DISCUSSION :—

<i>The Duke of Devonshire</i> ...	566	<i>Lord Davey</i> ...	567
<i>Lord Tweedmouth</i> ...	567		

On Question, "That Sub-section 4 shall stand part of the clause," agreed to.

Amendment moved—

"In page 2, line 16, to leave out 'one-third,' and insert 'one-fourth.'"—(*The Lord Tweedmouth.*)

<i>The Duke of Devonshire</i> ...	568
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On Question, "That the word 'one-third' shall stand part of the clause," agreed to.

Amendment moved—

"In page 2, after line 17, insert as a separate sub-section, 'The mayor and an alderman of a metropolitan borough shall be required to accept office within the same period as is allowed in the case of a councillor.'"—(*The Lord President of the Council.*)

On Question, "That this sub-section shall be here inserted," agreed to.

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Clause 2, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 3, amended, and agreed to.

Clause 4 :—

Amendment moved—

“In page 3, line 17, after ‘made,’ to insert, ‘with necessary particulars.’”—
(*The Lord Welby.*)

DISCUSSION :—

<i>The Duke of Devonshire</i> ...	570	<i>The Earl of Onslow</i> ...	572
<i>The Earl of Hardwicke</i> ...	571	<i>The Earl of Hardwicke</i> ...	572
<i>Lord Wolverton</i> ...	571	<i>Lord Welby</i> ...	572

On question, “That the words ‘with necessary particulars’ be here inserted,” resolved in the negative.

Amendment moved—

“In page 3, line 26, at the end, to add, ‘and the council shall have and exercise the powers of any such Act over the whole area of these boroughs.’”—
(*The Lord Tweedmouth.*)

DISCUSSION :—

<i>The Duke of Devonshire</i> ...	573	<i>Lord Monkswell</i> ...	574
<i>The Earl of Kimberley</i> ...	573	<i>The Duke of Devonshire</i> ...	575

On Question, “That the proposed words shall be here inserted,” resolved in the negative.

On Question, “That Clause 4 stand part of the Bill,” agreed to.

Clause 5, agreed to.

Clause 6 :—

Amendment moved—

“In page 4, line 27, after ‘road,’ to insert, ‘existing at the passing of this Act.’”—(*The Lord Tweedmouth.*)

<i>The Duke of Devonshire</i>	576
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On Question, “That the proposed words shall be here inserted,” agreed to.

Other Amendments made.

Clause 6, as amended, agreed to.

Amendment moved—

“In page 5, line 22, to leave out from ‘have’ to end of clause, and insert, ‘power to promote Bills in Parliament to make improvements of public utility wholly within their districts, and not intended to be paid for either wholly or in part out of the county fund.’”—(*The Lord Tweedmouth.*)

DISCUSSION :—

<i>The Duke of Devonshire</i> ...	577	<i>Lord James of Hereford</i> ...	578
<i>Lord Tweedmouth</i> ...	578	<i>Lord Tweedmouth</i> ...	579

On Question, “Whether the words proposed to be left out shall stand part of the clause, their Lordships divided :—Contents, 59 ; Not-Contents, 21.

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Clause 6, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 7, amended, and agreed to.

House resumed, and to be again in Committee To-morrow ; the Committee to have precedence of other Notices and Orders of the Day.

Manchester Canonries Bill [Lords]—House in Committee (according to Order) ; Bill reported, without Amendment ; Standing Committee negatived ; and Bill to be read the third time on Thursday next ... 580

House adjourned at Eight of the clock.

COMMONS : MONDAY, 26TH JUNE 1899.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [Lords]—(STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH.)—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz. :—Aberdeen Joint Passenger Station Bill [Lords] ; Caledonian Railway (General Powers) Bill [Lords] ; Manchester Corporation Tramways Bill [Lords] ; South Staffordshire Tramways Bill [Lords] ; Wolverhampton Tramways Bill [Lords]. Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time ... 581

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS [Lords]—(STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH.)—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz. :—Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 9) Bill [Lords]. Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time To-morrow ... 581

PRIVATE BILLS [Lords]—(NO STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO APPLICABLE.)—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders not previously inquired into are applicable, viz. :—Owen's College Manchester Bill [Lords]. Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time ... 582

Colonial and Foreign Banks Guarantee Fund Bill [Lords]—Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments ... 582

Airdrie and Coatbridge Water Bill [Lords] ; **Bristol Gas Bill** [Lords]—As amended, considered ; to be read the third time... 582

Dundee Gas Street Improvements and Tramways Bill [Lords] — As amended ; an Amendment made ; Bill to be read the third time ... 582

Gainsborough Urban District Council (Gas) Bill [Lords]—As amended, considered ; to be read the third time ... 582

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London County Council (General Powers) Re-Committed Bill —As amended, considered ;—Ordered, that Standing Orders 223 and 243 be suspended, and that the Bill be now read the third time.—(<i>Dr. Farquharson</i> .) Bill read the third time accordingly, and passed. [New Title]	582
Wick and Pulteney Harbours Bill [Lords]—As amended, considered; to be read the third time	582
Buenos Ayres and Pacific Railway Company Bill [Lords]— Transvaal Mortgage Loan and Finance Company Bill [Lords]— Yorke Estate Bill [Lords]—Read a second time, and committed	582
Leeds Corporation Bill —Ordered, that the Order of the House on the 14th April, 1899, that in the case of Bills reported from the Committee on Police and Sanitary Regulations, three days shall intervene between the date when the Report of the Committee is circulated with the Votes and the consideration of the Bill, be suspended in the case of the Leeds Corporation Bill. Ordered, That Standing Orders 84, 214, 215, and 239 be suspended, and that the Bill be now taken into consideration provided amended prints shall have been previously deposited.—(<i>Dr. Farquharson</i> .) Bill, as amended, considered accordingly. Ordered, That Standing Orders 223 and 243 be suspended, and that the Bill be now read the third time.—(<i>Dr. Farquharson</i> .)—Bill read the third time accordingly, and passed	582
Menstone Water Bill —Ordered, That, in the case of the Menstone Water Bill, Standing Orders 84, 214, 215, and 239 be suspended, and that the Bill be now taken into consideration provided amended prints shall have been previously deposited.—(<i>Dr. Farquharson</i> .)—Bill, as amended, considered accordingly. Ordered, That Standing Orders 223 and 243 be suspended, and that the Bill be now read the third time.—(<i>Dr. Farquharson</i> .) Bill read the third time accordingly, and passed	583
London United Tramways Bill —Ordered, That, in the case of the London United Tramways Bill, Standing Orders 84, 214, 215, and 239 be suspended, and that the Bill be now taken into consideration provided amended prints shall have been previously deposited.—(<i>Dr. Farquharson</i> .)—Bill, as amended, considered accordingly. Ordered, That Standing Orders 223 and 243 be suspended, and that the Bill be now read the third time.—(<i>Dr. Farquharson</i> .) Bill read the third time accordingly, and passed	583
PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP M) —Ordered, That the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Committee on the Kilpatrick Dock Bill, in the Session of 1897, and the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Committee on the Renfrew Burgh and Harbour Extension Bill, in the Session of 1898, be referred to the Committee on the Renfrew Burgh and Harbour Extension Bill [Lords] and the Clyde Navigation Bill [Lords] of the present session.—(<i>Dr. Farquharson</i> .)	
Education Department Provisional Order Confirmation (Liverpool) Bill [Lords]—Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment	584
Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 4) Bill —Read the third time, and passed	584
Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 12) Bill —As amended, considered; read the third time, and passed	584
Millwall Dock Bill —Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table	584

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St. Neot's Water Bill [Lords]—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed ... 584

Glasgow Corporation (Tramways, &c.) [Lords]; **Greenock and Port Glasgow Tramways** [Lords]—Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed ... 584

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS—That they have agreed to—Edinburgh Corporation Bill, Wetherby District Water Bill, South-Eastern Railway Bill, with Amendments; Amendments to Aberdeen Corporation Bill [Lords], without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confer further powers on the North Staffordshire Railway Company." [North Staffordshire Railway Bill [Lords]; And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confer further powers upon the Great Eastern Railway Company; to authorise them to execute further works; to acquire additional lands, and to raise further money; and for other purposes." [Great Eastern Railway (General Powers) Bill [Lords] ... 584

North Staffordshire Railway Bill [Lords]; **Great Eastern Railway (General Powers) Bill** [Lords]—Read a first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills ... 585

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 14) Bill—Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 14) Bill to divide the Bill into two Bills, one comprising the Orders relating to Isle of Thanet (Rural), Ramsgate, and Reading; the other comprising the Order relating to Rhyl, and to report them separately to the House—(Mr. T. W. Russell.) ... 585

DISCUSSION :—

Mr. Lloyd-George (Carnarvon) 585 *The Secretary to the Local Government Board (Mr. T. W. Russell, Tyrone, S.)* ... 585

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 14) Bill—Reported.

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Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 15) Bill—Comprising the Order relating to Rhyl; reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table; Bill re-committed ... 586

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ARMY RECRUITS—Question, Captain Norton (Newington, W.); Answer, The Under Secretary of State for War (Mr. Wyndham, Dover)	589
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NEWFOUNDLAND FISHERIES—Question, Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis); Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford)	589
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SELECT COMMITTEE ON SAVINGS BANKS—Question, Mr. Channing (Northamptonshire, E.); Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir M. Hicks-Beach, Bristol, W.) ...	600
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THE TELEPHONE BILL—Question, Mr. Faithfull Begg (Glasgow, St. Rollox) ; Answer, The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hanbury, Preston) 607

NEW MEMBERS—New Members sworn :—Arthur Dewar, Esq., for Burgh of Edinburgh (South Division) ; George M'Crae, Esq., for Burgh of Edinburgh (East Division).

ALLEGED BREACH OF PARLIAMENTARY USAGE.

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.)</i> ...	<i>Mr. Speaker [Ruling]</i> ...	610
<i>The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hanbury, Preston)</i> ...	<i>Sir John Lubbock (London University)</i> ...	612
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PUBLIC BUSINESS.

Board of Education Bill—SECOND READING—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed—

“ That the Bill be now read a second time.”—*Sir J. Gorst.*

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. Channing (Northampton, E.)</i> ...	<i>Mr. Grant Lawson (York, N.R., Thirsk)</i> ...	617	638
<i>Mr. Jebb (Cambridge University)</i> ...	<i>Mr. Birrell (Fife, W.)</i> ...	621	641
<i>Sir Wm. Anson (Oxford University)</i> ...	<i>Viscount Cranborne (Rochester)</i> ...	626	644
<i>Mr. Bryce (Aberdeen, S.)</i> ...	<i>Mr. F. S. Stevenson (Suffolk, Eye)</i> ...	629	649
<i>The Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education (Sir J. Gorst, Cambridge University)</i> ...	<i>Colonel Lockwood (Essex, Epping)</i> ...		652
	<i>Mr. Hobhouse (Somersetshire, E.)</i> ...		656
	<i>Sir Albert Rollit (Islington, S.)</i> ...		659
		630	

Attention called to the fact that forty Members were not present ; House counted, and, forty Members being found present,

<i>Sir Albert Rollit</i> ...	<i>Mr. C. P. Scott (Lancashire, Leigh)</i> ...	660	665
<i>Sir F. S. Powell (Wigan)</i> ...	<i>Mr. Evelyn Cecil (Herts, Hertford)</i> ...	662	667

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Amendment proposed—

“To leave out the word ‘now,’ and at the end of the Question to add the words ‘upon this day three months.’”—(*Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice.*)

Question proposed, “That the word ‘now’ stand part of the Question.”

DISCUSSION :—

<i>The First Lord of the Treasury</i>	<i>Sir H. H. Fowler (Wolverhampton, E.)</i>	...	...	...	675
(<i>Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.</i>)	<i>Sir J. Gorst</i>	...	...	...	675

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question put, and agreed to; Bill read a second time.

Motion made and Question proposed—

“That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Law, &c.”—(*Sir John Gorst.*)

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. Bryce</i>...	...	...	679	<i>Mr. A. J. Balfour</i>	...	...	682
<i>Sir J. Gorst</i>	...	...	679	<i>Mr. C. P. Scott</i>	...	...	682
<i>Mr. Yoxall (Nottingham, W.)</i>	679	<i>Lord Hugh Cecil (Greenwich)</i>	683
<i>Sir John Lubbock (London University)</i>	680	<i>Mr. Channing</i>	684
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<i>Mr. A. J. Balfour</i>	681	<i>Sir H. H. Fowler</i>	685
<i>Mr. Humphreys - Owen (Montgomeryshire)</i>	682	<i>Mr. A. J. Balfour</i>	687
				<i>Dr. Clark (Caithness)</i>	...	...	688

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 182; Noes, 80. (Division List, No. 206.)

Bill committed to the Standing Committee on Law, &c.

Telegraphs (Telephonic Communication, &c.) Bill—Order read for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question (21st June), “That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, &c.”

Question again proposed.

<i>The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hanbury, Preston)</i>	692
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Amendment proposed—

“To leave out the words ‘the Standing Committee on Trade, &c.’ and add the words, ‘a Select Committee.’”—(*Mr. Cohen.*)

Question proposed, “That the words ‘the Standing Committee on Trade, &c.’ stand part of the Question.”

<i>Mr. Kimber (Wandsworth)</i>	695
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It being after Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

BOARD OF EDUCATION (SALARIES)—Committee to consider of authorising the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of any salaries and remuneration that may become payable under any Act of the present Session to provide for the establishment of a Board of Education for England and Wales [Queen’s Recommendation signified], To-morrow.—(*Sir John Gorst.*)

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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—Agricultural and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Bill; Tithe Rent-Charge (Rates) Bill—On the Motion for the Adjournment of the House :—

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.)</i> ...	696	<i>Mr. William Moore (Antrim, N.)</i>	698
<i>The First Lord of the Treasury</i>		<i>Captain Pirie (Aberdeen, N.)</i> ...	699
<i>(Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.)</i> ...	697	<i>Mr. Flynn (Cork, N.)</i> ...	699
<i>Sir T. Esmonde (Kerry, W.)</i>	698	<i>Mr. Murnaghan (Tyrone, Mid)</i>	700

Adjourned at a quarter after Twelve of the clock.

LORDS : TUESDAY, 27TH JUNE 1899.

NEW PEER—The Right Hon. Sir Philip Henry Wodehouse Currie, G.C.B., having been created Baron Currie of Hawley, in the County of Southampton—was (in the usual manner) introduced ... 701

SAT FIRST—The Lord Herschell sat first in Parliament after the death of his father ... 701

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments has laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with :—Leeds Corporation; London County Council (General Powers); Menstone Water... 701

Also, the Certificates that no Standing Orders are applicable to the following Bills :—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 9); Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 4); Military Lands Provisional Order ... 701

Also, the Certificates that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have not been complied with :—Derwent Valley Water; London United Tramways ... 701

And, also, the Certificates that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with :—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4); Local Government Provisional Orders (Gas); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 11); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 12); Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2); Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 16); Local Government Provisional Orders (Housing of the Working Classes) (No. 2); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7); Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8); Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 2); Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3) ... 701

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.—Report from, That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the following Bills, viz :—Bexhill and Rotherfield Railway; Bradford Tramways and Improvement; Godalming Corporation Water, ought to be dispensed with, and the Bills allowed to proceed ... 702

Read, and agreed to.

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London United Tramways Bill ; Derwent Valley Water Bill —Examiner's Certificates of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Monday next	702
Leith Harbour and Docks Bill ; South-Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Companies (New Lines) Bill ; Baker Street and Waterloo Railway Bill ; Blackpool Improvement Bill ; Great Northern and Strand Railway Bill ; London Improvements Bill —Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Marquess of Zetland be proposed to the House as a Member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Granard (E. Granard) ; read, and agreed to	702
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Godalming Corporation Water Bill —Read the second time, and committed; the Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection	703
Derby Corporation Tramways, &c., Bill —Read the second time, and committed	703
Walker and Wallsend Union Gas (Electric Lighting) Bill —Read the second time	703
Lowestoft Promenade Pier Bill ; London County Council (Money) Bill —Read the second time, and committed	703
London and North-Western Railway (New Railways) Bill ; London and North-Western Railway (Additional Powers) Bill —Read the second time, and committed ; the Committees to be proposed by the Com- mittee of Selection	703
Worcestershire County Council Bill ; Ionian Bank Bill —Read the second time	703
Brompton and Piccadilly Circus Railway Bill —Read the second time, and committed ; the Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selec- tion	703
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Colonial and Foreign Banks Guarantee Fund Bill [Lords] —Returned from the Commons, agreed to, with Amendments; the said Amendments considered, and agreed to	704
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Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill —Read the second time (according to Order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House	704
Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill —Read the second time (according to Order)	704
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Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill —Read the second time [according to Order], and committed to a Committee of the Whole House	705
Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 4) Bill; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Housing of the Working Classes) (No. 2) Bill; Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill —Read the second time (according to Order)... ..	705
Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill —Read the second time (according to Order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House	705
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Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [Lords] —House in Committee (according to Order); Amendments made; Standing Committee negatived; the Report of Amendments to be received on Thursday next	705
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Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 18) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 19) Bill; Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill—House in Committee (according to Order); Bills reported without Amendment; Standing Committee negatived; and Bills to be read the third time on Thursday next... 706

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill—Read the third time (according to Order), with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons ... 706

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill—Read the third time (according to Order), and passed ... 706

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 14) Bill—Brought from the Commons; read the first time; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 148.) ... 706

Godalming Corporation Water Bill—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the five Lords appointed a Select Committee on the Leith Harbour and Docks Bill and other Bills do form the Select Committee for the consideration of the Godalming Corporation Water Bill; read, and agreed to; all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bill to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bill ... 706

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PETITION.

London Government Bill—Petition for Amendment of—of Guardians of the Poor of St. George's-in-the-East; read, and ordered to lie on the Table ... 707

Isolation Hospitals (Amendment) Bill [Lords]—Reported from the Standing Committee with a further Amendment. The Report of the Amendments made in the Committee of the Whole House, and by the Standing Committee, to be received on Friday next ... 707

Fine or Imprisonment (Scotland and Ireland) Bill—Reported from the Standing Committee without Amendment, and to be read the third time on Thursday next ... 707

London Government Bill—House again in Committee (according to Order).

Clause 8:—

Amendment moved—

“ In page 6, line 19, after Sub-section (1) to insert new sub-section: ‘ A committee appointed to carry out the provisions of the Public Libraries Acts shall have power to spend up to the limit of the library rate as fixed when the Acts were adopted, and shall also have power to carry forward any unexpended balance at the end of the financial year without diminution of the rate for the succeeding year.’ ”—(*The Lord Windsor*.)

The Lord President of the Council (The Duke of Devonshire) ...

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

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Amendment moved—

“ In page 6, line 21, to leave out ‘ but to the extent to which the council so direct,’ and insert ‘ and,’ ”—(*The Lord Tweedmouth.*)

DISCUSSION :—

<i>The Duke of Devonshire</i> ...	711	<i>The Earl of Northbrook</i> ...	713
<i>The Marquess of Ripon</i> ...	712		

On Question, whether the words proposed to be left out shall stand part of the clause, their Lordships divided:—Contents, 94 ; Not-Contents, 21.

Amendment moved—

“ In page 6, line 25, after Sub-section 2, to insert, ‘ Every borough council shall from time to time appoint a finance committee for regulating and controlling the finance of the council ; and no order for payment of any sum shall be made by a borough council, except in pursuance of a resolution of the council passed on the recommendation of the finance committee ; and any costs, debt, or liability exceeding 50*l.* shall not be incurred, except upon a resolution of the council passed on an estimate submitted by the finance committee. The notice of the meeting at which any resolution for the payment of any sum out of the borough council’s fund, or any resolution for incurring any costs, debt, or liability exceeding 50*l.* will be proposed, shall state the amount of the said sum, costs, debt, or liability, and the purpose for which they are to be paid or incurred.’ ”—(*The Lord Monckswell.*)

DISCUSSION :—

<i>The Duke of Devonshire</i> ...	715	<i>Lord Tweedmouth</i> ...	719
<i>The Earl of Kimberley</i> ...	716	<i>The Duke of Devonshire</i> ...	720
<i>Lord James of Hereford</i> ...	717	<i>The Earl of Northbrook</i> ...	720
<i>The Marquess of Ripon</i> ...	718	<i>Earl Spencer</i> ...	720
<i>The Duke of Northumberland</i> ...	718	<i>Earl Russell</i> ...	721
<i>Lord Thring</i> ...	719		

On Question, “ That these words shall be here inserted,” their Lordships divided :—Contents, 65 ; Not-Contents, 50.

Clause 8, as amended, agreed to.

Amendment moved—

“ To insert new clause :

“ 8A.—(1) All payments to and out of the fund of the borough council shall be made to and by the borough treasurer, and all payments out of the fund shall, unless made in pursuance of the specific requirement of an Act of Parliament, or of an order of a competent Court, be made in pursuance of an order of the council signed by three members of the finance committee present at the meeting of the council, and countersigned by the town clerk, and the same order may include several payments. Moreover, all cheques for payment of moneys issued in pursuance of such order shall be countersigned by the town clerk, or by a deputy approved by the council.

“ (2) Any such order may be removed into the High Court of Justice by writ of certiorari, and may be wholly or partly disallowed or confirmed on motion and hearing, with or without costs, according to the judgment and discretion of the Court.”—(*The Lord Monckswell.*)

On Question, “ That these words shall be here inserted,” agreed to.

Clause 9 :—

Verbal Amendments agreed to.

Amendment moved—

“ In page 7, line 7, to leave out from ‘ be ’ to the end of the sub-section, and insert ‘ raised by an equal rate in the pound over the whole area of the borough.’ ”—(*The Lord Tweedmouth.*)

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DISCUSSION:—

<i>The Duke of Devonshire</i> ...	724	<i>Lord Tweedmouth</i> ...	725
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Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment moved—

“In page 7, line 8, after Sub-section (3) to insert: ‘Provided that the interest on any loan borrowed by an administrative vestry, district board, commissioners, or other body abolished by this Act, together with any charge for the repayment of such loan, shall continue to be charged exclusively upon the parish or parishes now chargeable therewith, except in any case where such loan is represented by an asset producing an income which is applied in reduction of the amount to be so raised by the borough council.’”—(*The Earl of Wemyss*.)

DISCUSSION:—

<i>The Duke of Devonshire</i> ...	726	<i>The Earl of Kimberley</i> ...	726
<i>The Earl of Wemyss</i> ...	726	<i>Lord James of Hereford</i> ...	727

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause 9 agreed to.

Clause 10:—

Drafting Amendments agreed to.

Amendment moved—

“In page 7, line 31, after ‘clerk’ to insert, ‘provided that a separate precept shall be required for the rate to meet the expenses of services administered by the London County Council, and a separate precept for the rate required to meet the grants paid to the local authorities by the County Council in pursuance of the Local Government Act, 1888, the Public Health (London) Act, 1891, and by this Act, and for the rates required to meet the contributions payable under the London Equalisation of Rates, Act, 1894.’”—(*The Lord Tweedmouth*.)

<i>The Duke of Devonshire</i>	728
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Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause 10, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 11, agreed to.

Clause 12:—

Amendment moved—

“In page 8, line 18, to leave out ‘where the whole of a Poor Law Union is within one borough the assessment committee shall.’”—(*The Lord Tweedmouth*.)

<i>Lord James of Hereford</i>	729
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Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Drafting Amendments made.

Clause 12, agreed to.

Clause 13, amended, and agreed to.

Clause 14:—

Drafting Amendments made.

Amendment moved—

“In page 9, line 14, at the end of the clause, to insert, ‘(5) The London County Council shall be entitled to make representations to the Commissioners and to the Committee of the Privy Council in respect to any of the matters referred to them by this Act, and shall be entitled to be heard in support of such representations.’”—(*The Lord Tweedmouth*.)

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DISCUSSION :—

<i>Lord James of Hereford</i> ...	730	<i>The Earl of Kimberley</i> ...	732
<i>The Earl of Kimberley</i> ...	730	<i>The Duke of Devonshire</i> ...	733
<i>Lord Davey</i> ...	730	<i>Earl Russell</i> ...	733
<i>The Earl of Kimberley</i> ...	731	<i>Lord James of Hereford</i> ...	733
<i>Lord Tweedmouth</i> ...	731	<i>The Marquess of Ripon</i> ...	734
<i>The Duke of Devonshire</i> ...	732	<i>Lord James of Hereford</i> ...	734
<i>Lord Davey</i> ...	732	<i>The Earl of Kimberley</i> ...	734

On Question, "That these words be here inserted," their Lordships divided :—Contents, 24 ; Not-Contents, 81.

Clause 14, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 15 :—

Amendment moved—

"In page 9, line 15, to omit 'may,' and insert 'shall.'"—(*The Earl of Kimberley.*)

On Question, "That 'may,' stand part of the clause," agreed to.

DISCUSSION :—

<i>The Earl of Wemyss</i> ...	735	<i>The Duke of Devonshire</i> ...	737
<i>The Earl of Kimberley</i> ...	736		

Amendment moved—

"In page 9, after line 35 to insert :

"“(e) for preserving, so far as may appear necessary or expedient, any right, power, exemption, or immunity heretofore exercised or enjoyed in respect of property belonging to, or occupied by, Crown or any Government Department ;

"“(f) for making such alterations in the boundaries of the electoral divisions, for the purpose of school board elections, as may be rendered necessary by any alteration in the areas of the County of London.”—(*The Lord President of the Council.*)

On Question, "That these words be here inserted," agreed to.

<i>Lord Monkswell</i>	737
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Amendment moved—

"In page 10, line 15, leave out from 'provision,' to end of clause, and insert, 'These shall also be deemed to be local authorities within the meaning of the said provisions :

"“(a) the Mayor, Commonalty, and Citizens, and the Court of Aldermen of the City of London, so far as relates to any powers exercisable by them or by officers appointed by them respectively within the ancient Borough of Southwark ; and

"“(b) The Dean and Chapter of the Collegiate Church of St. Peter, Westminster, so far as relates to any powers of local government exercisable by them or their officers within the Borough of Westminster, and the Court of Burgesses of the ancient City of Westminster.”—(*The Lord President of the Council.*)

On Question, "That these words be there inserted," agreed to.

Drafting Amendments made.

Clause 15, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 16 agreed to.

Clause 17 :—

DISCUSSION :—

<i>The Duke of Westminster</i> ...	738	<i>The Duke of Devonshire</i> ...	739
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Formal Amendments made.

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Amendment moved—

“In line 13, to leave out from ‘county’ to ‘and’ in line 14, and insert, ‘and where a detached part as aforesaid is surrounded by more than one county, such detached part shall become part of such county as shall be determined by Order in Council under this Act.’”—(*The Earl of Jersey.*)

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Lord Monkswell</i> ...	739	<i>The Duke of Devonshire</i> ...	740
<i>The Earl of Jersey</i> ...	740		

On Question, “That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question,” resolved in the negative.

On Question, “That these words be here inserted,” agreed to.

Amendment moved—

“In page 11, line 17, after Sub-section (4) to insert, ‘The county council of a county to which any part of another county is transferred under Sub-sections (2) or (3) of this section shall pay yearly, on the day corresponding with the date of the passing of this Act, to the county council of the county from which such transfer is made, such a sum as shall represent the equivalent of the county or other like rate for the year of the county from which any part of it is transferred as aforesaid, and which, but for such transfer, would have been leviable on the part so transferred.’”—(*The Earl of Jersey.*)

DISCUSSION :—

<i>The Duke of Devonshire</i> ...	740	<i>The Earl of Jersey</i> ...	740
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Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment moved—

“In page 11, line 18, after ‘London’ insert, ‘or to the detached part of the parish of Chelsea.’”—(*The Lord Windsor.*)

<i>The Duke of Devonshire</i>	741
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Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause 17, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 18 agreed to.

Clause 19 :—

Amendment moved—

“In page 11, line 39, after ‘Camberwell’ to insert, ‘or constitute Penge, with the addition of the part of that district of Beckenham which is within the metropolitan main drainage area, a separate metropolitan borough.’”—(*The Lord Tweedmouth.*)

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Lord Ashcombe</i> ...	742	<i>The Duke of Devonshire</i> ...	743
<i>Lord Thring</i> ...	743		

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendments proposed—

“In page 11, line 40, to leave out ‘for all purposes’; in page 12, lines 1 and 2, to leave out ‘of the appropriate county electoral division thereof, and in the latter case,’ and insert, ‘if it is so separated’; and in line 4, after ‘district,’ insert, ‘and, if necessary, shall determine the county electoral division to which it is to belong.’”

DISCUSSION :—

<i>The Marquess of Ripon</i> ...	744	<i>Lord James of Hereford</i> ...	744
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Amendments agreed to.

Clause 19, as amended, agreed to.

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Amendment proposed—

“To insert as a new clause, ‘An Order in Council under this Act may detach Kensington Palace from the Borough of Westminster, and attach it to the Borough of Kensington.’”—(*The Lord Glencsk.*)

DISCUSSION :—

The Duke of Westminster ... 745 *The Duke of Devonshire* ... 745.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause 20 agreed to.

Clause 21 :—

The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury 746

Amendments moved—

“In page 12, line 32, to leave out Sub-sections (3) (4) and (5) and insert :

“ ‘(3) As from the appointed day, the churchwardens of every parish within a metropolitan borough shall cease to be overseers, and references in any Act to the churchwardens and overseers of any such parish shall, except so far as those references relate to the affairs of the Church, be construed as references to the council of the borough comprising the parish, and the legal interest in all property vested either in the overseers or churchwardens and overseers of any such parish (other than property connected with the affairs of the church or held for an ecclesiastical charity within the meaning of the Local Government Act, 1894), shall, subject to the provisions of any scheme under this Act, vest in the borough council.

“ ‘(4) Provision shall be made by scheme under this Act for substituting nominees of the borough council for overseers as trustees of any charity, due regard being had to the area benefited by the charity.

“ ‘(5) The Charity Commissioners shall, for the purposes of this Act, have the like powers with respect to charities, subject to the like appeal, as they have under and for the purposes of the Local Government Act, 1894.

“ ‘(6) Nothing in this Act shall affect the right to the benefit of any charity, or shall alter or confer any power of altering the defined charitable purposes (if any) to which any property is by law applicable at the passing of this Act.’ ”
—(*The Lord President of the Council.*)

Amendments agreed to.

Clause 21, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 22 agreed to, without discussion.

Amendment proposed, to insert as a new clause—

“In case of the illness or absence of the town clerk, the borough council may appoint a deputy town clerk to hold office during their pleasure, and all things required or authorised by law to be done by or to the town clerk may be done by or to the deputy town clerk, and no defect in the appointment of a deputy shall invalidate his acts.”—(*The Lord President of the Council.*)

On Question, “That this clause be added to the Bill,” agreed to.

Clause 23 agreed to.

Clause 24 :—

Formal Amendments agreed to.

Amendment moved—

“In page 14, line 17, after Sub-section (3) to insert as a new sub section :
‘The London County Council shall have and may from time to time exercise the power to divide any borough in London, or any ward, into polling districts for the purposes of county, borough, or other local elections.’”—(*The Lord Tweedmouth.*)

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DISCUSSION :—

<i>Lord James of Hereford</i> ...	748	<i>The Earl of Kimberley</i> ...	748
<i>Lord Tweedmouth</i> ...	748		

On Question, "That this sub-section be here inserted," their Lordships divided :—Contents, 16 ; Not-Contents, 38.

Other Amendments made.

Clause 24, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 25 :—

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Lord Tweedmouth</i> ...	749	<i>The Duke of Devonshire</i> ...	750
<i>Lord James of Hereford</i>	749		

Clause agreed to.

Clauses 26 and 27 agreed to.

Clause 28 :—

Amendments proposed—

"In page 16, line 22, before 'nothing,' to insert 'except so far as the areas of parishes and sanitary districts are altered by or under this Act ;' and, in line 27, to leave out 'shall constitute,' and insert, 'constitutes.'"—(*The Lord President of the Council.*)

Amendments agreed to.

Other Amendments made.

Clause 28 agreed to.

Clause 29 :—

Amendment proposed—

"In page 16, line 31, after 'public,' to insert, 'or any part thereof.'"—(*The Lord Teynham.*)

DISCUSSION :—

<i>The Duke of Devonshire</i> ...	751	<i>The Earl of Kimberley</i> ...	752
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Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause 29 agreed to.

Moved, to insert the following new clause—

"(1) All documents required by Statute or by Standing Orders of Parliament to be deposited with the vestry or vestry clerk of a parish in a metropolitan borough shall, from and after the passing of this Act, be deposited with the town clerk of the borough comprising that parish, and the enactments with respect to the inspection of, and taking copies of, and extracts from any such documents, shall apply as if the town clerk were mentioned therein.

"(2) The custody of the registers of baptisms, marriages, and burials, and of all other books and documents containing entries wholly or partly relating to the affairs of the Church or to ecclesiastical charities, except documents directed by law to be kept with the public books, writings, and papers of the parish, shall remain as provided by the existing law, unaffected by this Act. All other public books, writings, or papers of a parish in a metropolitan borough, and all documents directed by law to be kept therewith, shall be deposited in such custody as the council of the borough comprising that district may direct. The incumbent and churchwardens on the one part, and the council of the borough comprising the parish on the other, shall have reasonable access to all such books, documents, writings, and papers as are referred to in this sub-section, and any difference as to custody or access shall be determined by the London County Council.

"(3) The London County Council shall from time to time inquire into the manner in which the public books, writings, papers, and documents under the control of the council of a metropolitan borough are kept, with a view to the proper preservation thereof, and shall make such orders as they think necessary for such preservation, and those orders shall be complied with by the borough council."—(*The Lord Tweedmouth.*)

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DISCUSSION :—

<i>The Duke of Devonshire</i> ...	753	<i>Lord James of Hereford</i> ...	754
<i>Lord Tweedmouth</i> ...	753		

On Question, "That the proposed clause be here inserted," resolved in the negative.

Remaining clauses agreed to, with Amendments.

Standing Committee negatived; the Report of Amendments to be received on Monday next; and Bill to be printed, as amended. (No. 147.)

QUESTION.

MALTA—WRECK INQUIRIES—Question, Lord Muskerry; Answer, The Secretary to the Board of Trade (the Earl of Dudley) ...	755
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House adjourned at Eight of the clock.

COMMONS: TUESDAY, 27TH JUNE 1899.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Barton-on-Sea Water Bill [Lords]—Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments ...	755
Grosvenor Chapel (London) Bill [Lords]; Hampstead Church (Emmanuel, West End) Bill [Lords]—Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments ...	755
Lanarkshire (Middle Ward District) Water Bill —Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments ...	755
Inverness Harbour Bill [Lords]. (By Order.)—As amended, considered; a clause added; an Amendment made; Bill to be read the third time ...	755
Oystermouth Railway or Tramroad Bill [Lords]—Read a second time, and committed... ..	755
Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 14) Bill —As amended, considered; read the third time, and passed ...	756
Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 9) Bill [Lords]—Read a second time, and committed ...	756
Local Government Provisional Order (No. 15) Bill —Ordered, That the Order for re-committal be read, and discharged; That the Bill be re-committed to a Select Committee of Five Members, Three to be nominated by the House, and Two by the Committee of Selection. Ordered, That all Petitions against the Bill presented not later than five clear days before the meeting of the Committee be referred to the Committee. Ordered, That such of the Petitioners as pray to be heard by themselves, their counsel, agents, or witnesses, be heard on their Petitions against the Bill, if they think fit, and counsel heard in support of the Bill. Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records. Ordered, That Three be the quorum.—(<i>Mr. T. W. Russell.</i>) ...	756

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West Metropolitan Railway Bill—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and be printed 756

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 17) Bill—Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table; Bill, as amended, to be considered To-morrow 756

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS—That they have agreed to—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill; Housing of the Working Classes Provisional Order (Borrowstounness) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill [Lords], without Amendment; St. James's and Pall Mall Electric Light Bill, with an Amendment; Amendments to Hastings and St. Leonards Gas Bill [Lords], without Amendment 756

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to authorise the Corporation of Hastings to enter into Agreements with the Hastings Harbour Commissioners to guarantee the payment by the Corporation of interest upon capital for the completion of Hastings Harbour; to provide for the transfer of the Harbour Undertaking to the Corporation; and for other purposes." [Hastings Harbour Bill [Lords] 756

Hastings Harbour Bill [Lords]—Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 757

PETITIONS.

EAST INDIA (CONTAGIOUS DISEASES)—Petition from Bedminster, against State regulation; to lie upon the Table 757

Local Government (Scotland) Act (1894) Amendment Bill—Petition from Stirling, in favour; to lie upon the Table 757

POOR LAW AMENDMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1845—Petition from Carluke, for alteration of law; to lie upon the Table 757

POOR LAW RELIEF (DISFRANCHISEMENT)—Petition from Tynemouth, for alteration of law; to lie upon the Table 757

PRIVATE BILL LEGISLATION (MUNICIPAL TRADING)—Petition of the Federation of Grocers' Associations, for inquiry by a Select Committee; to lie upon the Table 757

Sale of Food and Drugs Bill—Petition from Tenbury, for alteration; to lie upon the Table 757

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill—Petition from Dukinfield, in favour; to lie upon the Table 757

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

TUBERCULOSIS (INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS)—Copy presented, of Report of the Right Hon. Sir Herbert Maxwell, Baronet, M.P., F.R.S., and P. H. Pye-Smith, Esq., M.D., F.R.S., the Delegates of Her Majesty's Government at the International Congress on Tuberculosis, held at Berlin on the 24th to the 27th May, 1899 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 758

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill—Copy ordered, "of Memorandum stating the nature of the Proposals contained in the Provisional Orders included in the Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*) Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 247] 758

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Gas and Water Orders Confirmation Bill —Copy ordered, “of Memorandum stating the nature of the Proposals contained in the Provisional Orders included in the Gas and Water Orders Confirmation Bill.”—(<i>Mr. Ritchie</i> .) Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 248]	758
Gas Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill —Copy ordered, “of Memorandum stating the nature of the Proposals contained in the Provisional Orders included in the Gas Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill.”—(<i>Mr. Ritchie</i> .) Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 249]	758
Gas Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill —Copy ordered, “of Memorandum stating the nature of the Proposals contained in the Provisional Orders included in the Gas Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill.”—(<i>Mr. Ritchie</i> .) Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 250]	758

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THE MILITIA ESTABLISHMENT —Question, Mr. R. G. Webster (St. Pancras, E.); Answer, The Under Secretary of State for War (Mr. Wyndham, Dover)... ..	760
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NEW WRIT.

For the election of two Members for the Borough of Oldham, in the room of Robert Ascroft, Esq., deceased, and James Francis Oswald, Esq., Q.C. (Manor of Northstead).—(*Sir William Walrond*) ... 782

Reformatory Schools Amendment Bill [Lords]—Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 252.] ... 782

PUBLIC BUSINESS.

Tithe Rent-Charge (Rates) Bill—SECOND READING.—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day three months.'"—(*Mr. Asquith*.)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

DISCUSSION :—

<i>The President of the Board of Agriculture (Mr. Walter Long, Liverpool, West Derby) ...</i>	<i>Mr. Billson (Halifax) ...</i>	793	833
<i>Mr. Birrell (Fife, W.) ...</i>	<i>Mr. Stuart (Shoreditch, Hoxton) ...</i>	801	844
<i>Mr. Cripps (Gloucester, Stroud) ...</i>	<i>Mr. Griffith-Boscawen (Kent, Tunbridge) ...</i>	807	848
<i>Mr. Samuel Evans (Glamorganshire, Mid) ...</i>	<i>Mr. Alfred Thomas (Glamorganshire, E.) ...</i>	812	853
<i>The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) ...</i>	<i>Lord E. Fitzmaurice (Wills, Cricklade) ...</i>	815	854
<i>Mr. Samuel Evans ...</i>	<i>Lord Edward Manners (Leicestershire, Melton) ...</i>	816	860
<i>Mr. Long ...</i>	<i>Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs) ...</i>	816	860
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<i>Mr. George Whiteley (Stockport) ...</i>	<i>Mr. Haldane (Haddington) ...</i>	821	865
<i>Captain Pretyma (Suffolk, Woodbridge) ...</i>	<i>Major Rasch (Essex, S.E.) ...</i>	828	867
	<i>Mr. McKenna (Monmouth, N.) ...</i>		

Debate arising.

Debate adjourned till Thursday.

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Telegraphs (Telephonic Communication, &c.) Bill—Order read, for resuming adjourned Debate on Amendment [26th June] to Motion for Committal to Standing Committee on Trade, &c. [21st June]:—

And which Amendment was—

“To leave out the words ‘the Standing Committee on Trade, &c.’ and to add the words ‘a Select Committee.’”—(*Mr. Cohen.*)

Question again proposed, “That the words ‘the Standing Committee on Trade &c.’ stand part of the Question.”

Mr. McIver (Liverpool, Kirkdale) 870

Debate further adjourned till To-morrow.

Electric Lighting (Clauses) Bill—Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 :—

Mr. Caldwell (Lunark, Mid) 870

It being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress ; to sit again To-morrow.

Baths and Wash-houses Acts Amendment Bill—Considered in Committee.

Clause 3 :—

Committee report Progress ; to sit again on Thursday 872

Metropolis Management Acts Amendment (Bye-laws) Bill [Lords]—Considered in Committee.

Clause 1 :—

Committee report Progress ; to sit again To-morrow 872

Adjourned at a quarter after Twelve of the clock.

COMMONS : WEDNESDAY, 28TH JUNE 1899.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Brynmawr and Western Valleys Railway Bill—Lords' Amendments considered, and agreed to 873

Bury Corporation Bill [Lords] ; Bury Corporation Water Bill [Lords]—As amended, considered ; to be read the third time 873

Brooke's Park (Londonderry) Bill [Lords]—To be read a second time upon Thursday, 6th July 873

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 17) Bill—As amended, considered ; to be read the third time to-morrow 873

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Local Government Provisional Order (No. 15) Bill [Rhyl Order] —Mr. Baldwin, Mr. M'Kenna, and Mr. Tomlinson nominated members of the Select Committee on Local Government Provisional Order (No. 15) Bill [Rhyl Order], with two members to be added by the Committee of Selection.—(<i>Sir William Walrand</i>)	873
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PETITIONS.

Board of Education Bill —Petition from Birmingham, for alteration, to lie upon the Table	873
Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Bill —Petition from Newton Stewart, in favour; to lie upon the Table	873
Sale of Food and Drugs Bill —Petition from Glasgow, for alteration; to lie upon the Table	873
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill —Petitions in favour: From Bradford, and Grantham (two); to lie upon the Table	873
VAGRANCY ACT, 1898 —Petitions from Glasgow, for extension of provisions to Scotland; to lie upon the Table	874

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

ARMY RIFLE RANGES —Return [presented 26th June], to be printed. [No. 251.]	874
INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION (IRELAND) —Copy presented of Rules and Programme of Examinations for 1900 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table	874
TRADE REPORTS —Annual Series—Copies presented of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 2,296 to 2,301 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table	874
TRADE REPORTS —Miscellaneous Series—Copy presented of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Miscellaneous Series, No. 506 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table	874
Public Health Acts Amendment Bill —Special Report from the Select Committee on the Public Health Acts Amendment Bill, with Minutes of Evidence, brought up, and read	874
Public Health Acts Amendment Bill —Reported, without Amendment, Report and Special Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 252.)	874

PUBLIC BUSINESS.

Telegraphs (Telephonic Communication, &c.) Bill—Order read, for resuming adjourned Debate on Amendment [June 26th] to Question [June 21st]—“That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, &c.”:—

And which Amendment was—

“To leave out the words ‘the Standing Committee on Trade, &c.’ and add the words ‘a Select Committee.’”—(*Mr. Cohen.*)

Question again proposed—“That the words ‘the Standing Committee on Trade, &c.’ stand part of the Question.”

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DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. Kimber (Wandsworth)</i> ...	875	<i>Mr. W. F. Lawrence</i> ...	887
<i>Mr. Cawley (Lancs., Prest- wich)</i> ...	875	<i>Mr. Lough (Islington, W.)</i> ...	888
<i>Mr. Labouchere (Northamp- ton)</i> ...	876	<i>Mr. Faithfull Begg (Glasgow, St. Rollox)</i> ...	889
<i>The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Han- bury, Preston)</i> ...	877	<i>Mr. Broadhurst (Leicester)</i> ...	891
<i>Mr. Labouchere</i> ...	877	<i>Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis)</i> ...	894
<i>Sir John Lubbock (London University)</i> ...	878	<i>Mr. Broadhurst</i> ...	895
<i>The First Lord of the Trea- sury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.)</i> ...	883	<i>Mr. Stuart</i> ...	895
<i>Mr. Stuart (Shoreditch, Hoxton)</i> ...	885	<i>Mr. Provand (Glasgow, Black- friars)</i> ...	896
<i>Mr. W. F. Lawrence (Liver- pool, Abercromby)</i> ...	885	<i>Lord E. Fitzmaurice (Wills, Cricklade)</i> ...	896
<i>Mr. Hanbury</i> ...	887	<i>Mr. Gedge (Walsall)</i> ...	898
		<i>Sir J. T. Woodhouse (Hudders- field)</i> ...	899
		<i>Sir Harry Bullard (Norwich)</i> ...	899
		<i>Mr. Chas. McArthur (Liverpool Exchange)</i> ...	899
		<i>Mr. Colville (Lanark, N.E.)</i> ...	900

Question put, and agreed to.

Main Question put, and agreed to :—Bill committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, &c.

Small Houses (Acquisition of Ownership) Bill—As amended (by the Standing Committee), considered.

New clause—

“(1) A local authority shall keep at their offices a book containing a list of any advances made by them under this Act, and shall enter therein with regard to each advance—(a) a description of the house in respect of which the advance is made; (b) the amount advanced; (c) the amount for the time being repaid; (d) the name of the proprietor for the time being of the house; and (e) such other particulars as the local authority think fit to enter.

“(2) The book shall be open to inspection at the office of the local authority during office hours free of charge.”—(*Mr. Secretary Chamberlain*)

Brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, “That the clause be read a second time.”

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. Caldwell (Lanark, Mid)</i> ...	902	<i>Mr. Warr (Liverpool, East Toxteth)</i> ...	904
<i>The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. J. Chamberlain, Birming- ham, W.)</i> ...	902	<i>Mr. J. Samuel (Stockton)</i> ...	905
<i>Mr. Caldwell</i> ...	903	<i>Mr. John Wilson (Durham, Mid)</i> ...	906
<i>Mr. Billson (Halifax)</i> ...	903	<i>Mr. Lowles (Shoreditch, Hagg- ston)</i> ...	908

Motion and clause, by leave, withdrawn.

New clause—

“The local authority may accept as collateral security a policy of assurance on the life of a proprietor granted by a friendly or other society, and in that case shall reduce the charge for interest by five shillings per centum per annum.

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"On the death of the proprietor the local authority shall be entitled to give a discharge to a friendly or other society for the sum insured, and shall pay to the legal personal representative of the proprietor the balance of the insurance money after providing for the mortgage debt and for all expenses incurred by them."—(*Mr. Drage.*)

Brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the clause be read a second time."

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. J. Chamberlain</i> ...	911	<i>The Solicitor - General (Sir R. B. Finlay, Inverness Burghs)</i>	913
<i>Mr. Bartley (Islington, N.)</i>	912	<i>Mr. Birrell (Fife, W.)</i> ...	913
<i>Sir Alfred Hickman (Wolverhampton, W.)</i> ...	912	<i>Colonel Hughes (Woolwich)</i> ...	913
<i>Mr. Samuel Evans (Glamorgan, Mid)</i> ...	912	<i>Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.)</i> ...	914
		<i>Sir Howard Vincent (Sheffield, Central)</i> ...	914

Motion and clause, by leave, withdrawn.

New clause—

"A local authority may make the like advances to two or more persons jointly to whom this Act applies, for the purpose of acquiring a row or block of dwellings in which they *bond fide* intend to reside; such advances to be subject to the same provisions and restrictions (as far as they apply) as if the advances were made to one person in respect of one house."—(*Sir Alfred Hickman.*)

Brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the clause be read a second time."

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. J. Chamberlain</i> ...	915	<i>Mr. Gray (West Ham, N.)</i> ...	915
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Motion and clause, by leave, withdrawn

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 10, to leave out the words 'four-fifths' in order to insert the words 'nine-tenths,' instead thereof."—(*Mr. Lowles.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'four-fifths' stand part of the Bill."

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. J. Chamberlain</i> ...	917	<i>Mr. Bainbridge (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough)</i> ...	918
<i>Mr. Lowles</i> ...	917	<i>Mr. Bartley (Islington, N.)</i> ...	918
<i>Mr. Hobhouse (Somersetshire, E.)</i>	917		

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 259 ; Noes, 67. (Division List, No. 207.)

Amendment proposed—

"In Clause 1, page 1, line 12, at end, to insert 'or in the case of a fee simple, or leasehold of not less than ninety-nine years unexpired at the date of the purchase, three hundred pounds.'"—(*Mr. Secretary Chamberlain.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and agreed to.

Amendment proposed—

"In Clause 2, page 2, line 16, after 'house,' to insert, 'and is not already the proprietor within the meaning of this Act of a house to which the statutory conditions apply.'"—

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and agreed to.

Amendment proposed—

"In Clause 3, page 3, line 22, at end to add : '(5) In the case of the bankruptcy of the proprietor of the house, or in the case of a deceased proprietor's estate being administered in bankruptcy under Section 125 of the Bankruptcy Act, 1883, the local authority may either take possession of the house or order the sale of the house without taking possession, and shall do so except in pursuance of some arrangement to the contrary with the trustee in bankruptcy.'"—(*Mr. Solicitor-General.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put and agreed to.

Amendment proposed—

"In Clause 7, page 5, line 17, at end to add, 'and where the proprietor of any such house becomes bankrupt, or his estate is administered in bankruptcy under Section 125 of the Bankruptcy Act, 1883, and in either case an arrangement under this Act is made with the trustee in bankruptcy, the condition as to residence shall, if the local authority think fit, be suspended during the continuance of the arrangement.'"—(*Mr. Solicitor-General.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. William Moore (Antrim,</i>	<i>Sir R. B. Finlay</i>	...	...	924
<i>W.)</i>	...	...	...	924

Question put and agreed to.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 5, line 39, to leave out from the word 'any' to the end of Subsection (1) of Clause 9, in order to insert the words 'urban or rural district' instead thereof."—(*Mr. Hobhouse.*)

Question proposed, "That the words from the word 'any,' to the word 'urban,' in line 40, stand part of the Bill."

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. J. Chamberlain</i>	...	927	<i>Mr. Bill (Staffordshire, Leek)</i>	...	931
<i>Lord E. Fitzmaurice</i>	...	928	<i>Mr. Sydney Buxton (Tower</i>		
<i>Colonel Milward (Warwick,</i>			<i>Hamlets, Poplar)</i>	...	932
<i>Stratford-on-Avon)</i>	...	929	<i>Sir R. B. Finlay</i>	...	932
<i>Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.)</i>	...	930	<i>Mr. Gray (West Ham, N.)</i>	...	933
<i>Commander Bethell (York,</i>					
<i>E.R., Holderness)</i>	...	931			

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 240 ; Noes, 126. (Division List, No. 208.)

It being after half-past Five of the clock, further proceeding on consideration, as amended, stood adjourned.

Bill, as amended, to be further considered upon Monday next.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill — Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Orders confirmed] ; Report to lie upon the Table. 937
Bill, as amended, to be considered To-morrow.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP L)—Ordered, That James Dyson do attend the said Committee on Group L. of Private Bills on Friday, at half-past Eleven of the clock 937

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Southampton Corporation Water Bill [Lords]—Reported [Preamble not proved]; Report to lie upon the Table	937
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PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE —Fourth Report, with Minutes of Evidence and an Appendix, brought up, and read. Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 253.]	937
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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Clerical Tithes Bill; Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Bill—On the motion for adjournment.

DISCUSSION :—

<i>The Secretary to the Treasury</i>	<i>Mr. Hemphill (Tyrone, N.)</i>	939
<i>(Sir Wm. Walrond, Devonshire, Tiverton)</i>	<i>Mr. Johnson (Belfast, S.)</i>	940
<i>Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.)</i>	<i>Mr. Dillon</i>	940
<i>Mr. Flynn (Cork, N.)</i>	<i>Sir W. Walrond</i>	940

House adjourned at ten minutes before Six o'clock.

COMMONS : THURSDAY, 29TH JUNE 1899.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Taff Vale Railway Bill; Woking Water and Gas Bill —Committee to meet To-morrow	941
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North-West London Railway Bill —Re-committed : The Committee to meet To-morrow	941
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Bootle Corporation Bill —The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn : The Order made on the 15th instant discharged ; and Bill committed	941
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Scunthorpe Urban District Gas and Water Bill —Reported from the Select Committee with Amendments...	941
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Cork Corporation (Finance) Bill —Reported without Amendment	941
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Portsmouth Corporation Bill [Lords]—Reported with Amendments	941
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Blackpool Improvement Bill —Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, no parties having appeared in opposition thereto ; read, and ordered to lie on the Table : The Orders made on the 23rd instant and Monday last discharged ; and Bill committed	941
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South-Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Companies (New Lines) Bill —Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, no parties having appeared in opposition thereto ; read, and ordered to lie on the Table : The Orders made on the 13th instant and Monday last discharged ; and Bill committed...	941
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East London Water Bill —Report from the Select Committee, That it is not expedient to proceed further with the Bill : read, and ordered to lie on the Table	942
Midland Railway Bill —The Queen's consent signified ; and Bill reported from the Select Committee with Amendments	942
Leith Harbour and Docks Bill —The Queen's consent signified ; and Bill reported from the Select Committee with Amendments	942
Fylde Water Board Bill [Lords]—Read the third time, and passed, and sent to the Commons	942
Kensington and Notting Hill Electric Lighting Bill ; Barry Railway Bill ; Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (New Railways) Bill ; Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (Various Powers) Bill —Read the third time, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons	942
Grosvenor Chapel (London) Bill [Lords] ; Hampstead Church (Emmanuel, West End) Bill [Lords]—Returned from the Commons agreed to	942
Brynmawr and Western Valleys Railways Bill —Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to... ..	942
Barton-on-Sea Water Bill [Lords] ; Lanarkshire (Middle Ward District) Water Bill [Lords]—Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments : The said Amendments considered, and agreed to	942
Local Government Provisional Orders (Gas) Bill ; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill ; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill ; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill ; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 11) Bill ; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Housing of the Working Classes) (No. 2) Bill —Committed to a Committee of the whole House '... ..	943
Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill —Committed ; the Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection	943
Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 16) Bill —Committed to a Committee of the whole House To-morrow	943
Military Lands Provisional Order Bill —Committed to a Committee of the whole House	943
Walker and Wallsend Union Gas (Electric Lighting) Bill —Committed	943
Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill —House to be in Committee To-morrow	943
Gas Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [Lords]—House in Committee (according to Order) ; the Amendments proposed by the Select Committee made ; further Amendments made ; Standing Committee negatived ; the Report of Amendments to be received To-morrow	943
Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [Lords] ; Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 3) Bill [Lords]—Amendments reported (according to Order), and Bills to be read the third time To-morrow	943

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Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 18) Bill ; Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 19) Bill ; Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill —Read the third time (according to Order), and passed	944
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Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill —Brought from the Commons ; read the first time ; to be printed ; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 149.)	944
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TUBERCULOSIS —Report of the Right Honourable Sir Herbert Maxwell, Baronet, M.P., F.R.S., and P. H. Pye-Smith, Esquire, M.D., F.R.S., the delegates of Her Majesty's Government at the International Congress on Tuberculosis held at Berlin on the 24th to the 27th May, 1899... ..	944
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CEYLON —Correspondence relating to recent land legislation in Ceylon	944
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INDIA (RAILWAYS) —Administration Report on the Railways in India for 1898-99. Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table	944
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LUNACY —Fifty third Report of the Commissioners in Lunacy to the Lord Chancellor	945
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INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION BOARD (IRELAND) —Rules and programme of examinations for 1900	945
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PUBLIC RECORDS (WAR DEPARTMENT) —Fifth Schedule, containing a list and particulars of classes of documents which have been removed from the office of Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the War Department, and Deposited in the Public Record Office, but which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation therein. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table	945
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PETITION.

MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS (BOROUGH FUNDS) ACT, 1872 —Petition for amendment of ; of the Urban District Council of Mytholmroyd, in the County of York. Read, and ordered to lie on the Table	945
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Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 3) Bill —[THIRD READING].—Order of the day for the Third Reading read.
--

Moved, "That the Bill be now read the third time."—(*The Earl of Dudley.*)

DISCUSSION :—

The Earl of Crawford ... 945

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade (The Earl of Dudley) 945

On Question, agreed to.

Bill read the third time accordingly, and passed.

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Summary Jurisdiction Act (1879) Amendment Bill—[SECOND READING]

—Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read the second time."—(*Lord Penrhyn*.)

DISCUSSION :—

<i>The Earl of Kimberley</i> ...	951	<i>Lord Belper</i> ...	...	...	951
<i>Lord Penrhyn</i> ...	...	...	...	...	...

On Question, agreed to.

Bill read the second time (according to Order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next.

Poor Law Acts Amendment Bill [Lords]—[SECOND READING]. Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.Moved, "That the Bill be now read the second time."—(*Lord Harris*.)

DISCUSSION :—

<i>The Earl of Kimberley</i> ...	954	<i>The Lord Bishop of Winchester</i>	955
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On Question, agreed to.

Bill read the second time accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House.

Manchester Canonries Bill [Lords]—Read the third time (according to Order), and passed, and sent to the Commons ... 957**Youthful Offenders Bill** [Lords].

House in Committee (according to Order).

Clauses 1 to 5 agreed to.

Clause 6 :—

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Lord Norton</i> ...	957	<i>Lord Norton</i> ...	958
<i>Lord James of Hereford</i> ...	958	...	...

Clauses 6 to 19 agreed to.

Bill reported without Amendment, and re-committed to the Standing Committee.

Fine or Imprisonment (Scotland and Ireland) Bill—Read the third time (according to Order), and passed.

QUESTIONS.

ESTATE DUTY ASSESSMENT—Question, The Chairman of Committees (The Earl of Morley) ; Answer, The Lord Privy Seal (Viscount Cross)... 958

CEYLON—CONDUCT OF MR. RAMANATHAN—Question, Lord Stanley of Alderley ; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (The Earl of Selborne) ... 961

THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES—Question, Lord Hawkesbury ; Answer, The Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (The Marquess of Salisbury) ... 962

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Six of the clock.

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PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

COMMONS: THURSDAY, 29TH JUNE 1899.

PRIVATE BILLS [Lords]. (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH.)

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table, Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.: Glasgow and South-Western Railway Bill [Lords]. Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 963

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS [Lords]. (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH.)

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table, Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz.: Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 10) Bill [Lords]. Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time To-morrow 963

Edinburgh Corporation Bill; Wetherby District Water Bill—Lords' Amendments considered, and agreed to 963

Airdrie and Coatbridge Water Bill [Lords]; **Bristol Gas Bill** [Lords]; **Dundee Gas, Street Improvements, and Tramways Bill** [Lords]; **Gainsborough Urban District Council (Gas) Bill** [Lords]—Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments 963

Wick and Pulteney Harbours Bill [Lords]—Queen's consent signified; read the third time, and passed, with Amendments 964

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 6) Bill—As amended, considered; read the third time, and passed 964

Newcastle-upon-Tyne Tramways and Improvement Bill—Reported from the Select Committee on Police and Sanitary Regulations Bills, with Amendments. Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 964

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP K)—Colonel GUNTER reported from the Committee on Group K of Private Bills, That, in order to meet the convenience of parties, they had adjourned till Monday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock. Report to lie upon the Table 964

STANDING ORDERS—Resolution reported from the Committee: "That, in the case of the Birmingham, North Warwickshire, and Stratford-upon-Avon Railway Bill [Lords], the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill, provided that Clause 24 be struck out of the Bill, unless it be proved to the satisfaction of the Committee on the Bill that the said clause has been submitted to a meeting of the proprietors of the Great Western Railway Company, held in accordance with the requirements of Standing Order 64:—That the Committee on the Bill do report how far such Order has been complied with." Resolution agreed to... .. 964

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PETITIONS.

GROUND RENTS (TAXATION BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES)—Petitions in favour :— From Orrell, Croydon, Llandanwg, Stretford, Whitby, Swinton and Pendlebury, Rawtenstall, and Haslingden ; to lie upon the Table...	964
Mines (Eight Hours) Bill —Petitions in favour :—From Dowlais (nine), Gorllwyn Level, Dyllas (two), British Rhondda, Lower Duffryn, Aberdare, Nantmelyn, Llethyshinkin, and Nantwen Collieries ; to lie upon the Table	965
ROMAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY IN IRELAND—Petition from Dublin, against establishment ; to lie upon the Table	965
Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill —Petition from Rochester, in favour ; to lie upon the Table	965

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RAILWAY ABANDONMENT—Copy presented, of Report by the Board of Trade respecting Clyde Navigation Bill and the objects thereof (pursuant to Standing Order 158A) ; referred to the Committee on the Bill	965
EAST INDIA (RAILWAYS)—Copy presented, of Administration Report on the Railways in India for 1898-9, by A. Brereton, esquire, Director of Railway Traffic and Statistics [by Command] ; to lie upon the Table	965
EAST INDIA (FINANCIAL STATEMENT, 1899-1900)—Return presented, relative thereto [Address 19th May ; <i>Sir Henry Fowler</i>] ; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 254)	965
CEYLON—Copy presented, of Correspondence relating to Recent Land Legisla- tion in Ceylon [by Command] ; to lie upon the Table	965
MINT—Copy presented, of Twenty-ninth Annual Report of the Deputy Master of the Mint, 1898 [by Command] ; to lie upon the Table	965
PAPERS LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE—1. Lunacy. Copy of Fifty-third Report of the Commissioners in Lunacy to the Lord Chancellor, with Appendix [by Act] ; to be printed. (No. 225)	965
2. Public Records (War Department).—Copy of Fifth Schedule of Documents (War Department) which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office [by Act]	966
3. Charitable Endowments (London).—Further return relative thereto [Ordered 2nd August, 1894 ; <i>Mr. Francis Stevenson</i>] ; to be printed. (No. 256)	966
STANDING COMMITTEES (CHAIRMEN'S PANEL)—Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR reported from the Chairmen's Panel : That they had appointed Sir James Fergusson to act as Chairman of the Standing Committee for the consideration of Bills relating to Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, in the place of Mr. Stuart-Wortley	966
Report to lie upon the Table.	
SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES)—Mr. HALSEY reported from the Com- mittee of Selection : That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure : Mr. Mount ; and had appointed in substitution, Mr. Talbot	

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Mr. HALSEY further reported from the Committee: That they had added to the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, the following fifteen Members in respect of the Board of Education Bill [Lords]: Sir William Anson, Mr. Birrell, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Channing, Sir John Gorst, Mr. Gray, Mr. Jebb, Mr. Brynmor Jones, Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth, Mr. Grant Lawson, Mr. Herbert Lewis, Colonel Lockwood, Colonel Williams, and Mr. Yoxall.

Mr. HALSEY further reported from the Committee: That they had appointed the following Member to the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures: Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Mr. HALSEY further reported from the Committee: That they had added to the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, the following fifteen Members in respect of the Telegraphs (Telephonic Communication, etc.) Bill: Mr. Bartley, Mr. Faithfull Begg, Mr. Griffith-Boscawen, Sir Charles Cameron, Mr. Cawley, Mr. Thomas Curran, Mr. Lewis Fry, Mr. Hanbury, Mr. Lough, Mr. Charles M'Arthur, Mr. Nichol, Mr. John Redmond, Mr. Strutt, Mr. Alfred Thomas, and Sir James Woodhouse 966

Reports to lie upon the Table.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS—That they have agreed to:—Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill, Belfast and Northern Counties Railway Bill, without Amendment. Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill, South Staffordshire Stipendiary Justice Bill, Fishguard Water and Gas Bill, with Amendments. Amendments to Colonial and Foreign Banks Guarantee Fund Bill [Lords], without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Education Department under the Elementary Education Acts, 1870 to 1893, to enable the School Board for London to put in force the Land Clauses Acts." [Education Department Provisional Order Confirmation (London) Bill [Lords].

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to empower the Corporation of Wolverhampton to construct tramways and street improvements, and to make further provision in regard to tramways in and in the neighbourhood of Wolverhampton, and in regard to the electric lighting and water undertakings of the Corporation and the finance of the borough, and for other purposes." [Wolverhampton Corporation Bill [Lords] 967

Education Department Provisional Order Confirmation (London) Bill [Lords]—Read the first time; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. (Bill 253.) 968

Wolverhampton Corporation Bill [Lords]—Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 968

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PUBLIC BUSINESS.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—(EXEMPTION FROM THE STANDING ORDER.)—

Motion made, and Question put, "That the proceedings on the Tithe Rent-charge (Rates) Bill, if under discussion at Twelve o'clock this right, be not interrupted under Standing Orderittings of this House."—(*Mr. Balfour.*)

The House divided :—Ayes, 263 ; Noes, 86. (Division List, No. 209.)

Tithe Rent-Charge (Rates) Bill—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Question [27th June], "That the Bill be now read a second time"; and which Amendment was—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day three months,'"—(*Mr. Asquith.*)

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

DISCUSSION :—

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Mr. Courtney	1010
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Mr. Courtney	1016
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Mr. Lloyd-George (Carnarvon Boroughs)	1066
Mr. Lowe, (Birmingham, Edgbaston)	1072
Sir H. H. Fowler (Wolverhampton, E.)	1077
The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.)	1089
Mr. Courtney	1096
Mr. A. J. Balfour	1097

The House divided :—Ayes, 314 ; Noes, 176. (Division List, No. 210.)

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Thursday next.

Reformatory Schools Amendment Bill [Lords]—SECOND READING—Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

Adjourned at twenty minutes before One of the clock.

LORDS : FRIDAY, 30TH JUNE 1899.

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Birmingham Corporation Bill —Committee to meet on Monday next	1109
Gas Light and Coke Company Bill —Report from Select Committee. That it is not expedient to proceed further with the Bill ; read, and ordered to lie on the Table	1109
Taff Vale Railway Bill —Reported with Amendments	1109
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Weston-super-Mare Grand Pier Bill [Lords]—Read the third time, and passed, and sent to the Commons	1109
Workington Corporation Bill [Lords]—Read the third time ; Amendments made ; Bill passed, and sent to the Commons	1109
Shirebrook and District Gas Bill —Read the third time, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons	1109

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Nottingham Corporation Bill —Read the third time, with the Amendments; further Amendments made; Bill passed, and returned to the Commons	1109
London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Bill; Belfast Water Bill; West Middlesex Water Bill; Central Electric Supply Bill —Read the third time, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons	1110
Millwall Dock Bill —Brought from the Commons; read the first time, and referred to the Examiners	1110
Edinburgh Corporation Bill; Wetherby District Water Bill —Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to	1110
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Bristol Gas Bill [Lords]; Dundee Gas, Street Improvements, and Tramways Bill [Lords] —Returned from the Commons, agreed to, with Amendments	1110
Belfast Corporation Bill; Dublin Corporation (Markets) Bill; Dublin Corporation Bill —Report from the Committee of Selection that the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills, viz.:—D. Northumberland (Chairman), E. Ellesmere, L. Braye, L. Middleton, and L. Aberdare; agreed to, and the said Lords appointed accordingly. The Committee to meet on Tuesday next at Eleven of the clock; and all Petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the Petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills	1110
Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 4) Bill —Committed; The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection	1110
Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill —House to be in Committee on Monday next.	
Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 9) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 11) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (Gas) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (Housing of Working Classes) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) Bill; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (No. 1) Bill; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Housing of the Working Classes) (No. 2) Bill —House to be in Committee on Monday next	1111
Gas Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [Lords] —Amendments reported (according to Order); and Bill to be read the third time on Monday next	1111
Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [Lords]; Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 3) Bill [Lords] —Read the third time (according to Order), and passed, and sent to the Commons	1111

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Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 16) Bill ; Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill —House in Committee (according to Order) ; Bill reported, without Amendment ; Standing Committee negatived, and Bills to be read the third time on Monday next	1111
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RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

ROYAL NIGER COMPANY —Letter from the Foreign Office to the Treasury, dated 15th June, 1899, with respect to the revocation of the Charter of the Royal Niger Company, and to the taking over by Her Majesty's Government of the administrative rights and powers of the Company, together with copies of the Treasury Minute on the subject, dated 30th June, 1899, and relative schedules. Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie upon the Table	1112
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FACTORY AND WORKSHOP (EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN OVERTIME IN WASHING BOTTLES, ETC.) —Order made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, extending to factories and workshops in which the washing of bottles for use in the preservation of fruit is carried on, the special exception with respect to the employment of women overtime contained in Section 53 of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1878, as amended by Sections 14 and 37 of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1895	1112
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WOODS, FORESTS, AND LAND REVENUES —Seventy-seventh Report of the Commissioners, dated 29th June, 1899 ; laid before the House [pursuant to Act], and ordered to lie upon the Table	1112
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PETITIONS.

VIVISECTION —Petition for suppression of the practice of : of the Pioneer Anti-Vivisection Society ; read, and ordered to lie on the Table... ..	1112
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Seats for Shop Assistants (England and Ireland) Bill —Petition in favour of ; of the Sanitary Institute : read, and ordered to lie on the Table	1112
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Oysters Bill [Lords] —Petition in favour of ; of the Sanitary Institute ; read, and ordered to lie on the Table	1112
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Education of Children Bill —SECOND READING.—Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.	
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Moved, " That the Bill be now read the second time."—(*Viscount Knutsford.*)

DISCUSSION :—

<i>The Lord President of the Council (The Duke of Devonshire)</i>	<i>The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury</i>	1121
<i>The Earl of Kimberley</i>	<i>The Lord Archbishop of York</i>	1122
... ..		1119
... ..		1120

On Question, agreed to.

Bill read a second time (accordingly), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next.

Isolation Hospitals Amendment Bill [Lords] —Amendments reported (according to Order), and Bill to be read the third time on Monday next	1122
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Elementary Education (Defective and Epileptic Children) Bill [Lords]

—House in Committee (according to Order) ... 1122

Clause 2 :—

DISCUSSION :—

Lord Reay ... 1122 *The Duke of Devonshire* ... 1124

Amendment moved—

"In Sub-section 1 (c), page 2. line 11, after 'children,' to insert, 'Provided that no child shall be boarded or lodged in an institution under this Act without a medical certificate stating that he or she, as the case may be, is not an idiot or imbecile. Such certificate shall be renewed yearly during the residence of the child in such institution.'—(*The Marquess of Bristol*.)

DISCUSSION :—

Lord Egerton ... 1126 *The Duke of Devonshire* ... 1126

Amendment (by leave of the Committee) withdrawn.

Amendment moved—

"In page 2, line 22, after the words 'resident in' to insert, 'or property belonging to.'—(*The Lord President of the Council*.)

DISCUSSION :—

The Earl of Kimberley ... 1127 *The Duke of Devonshire* ... 1127

On Question, "That these words be here inserted," agreed to.

Clause 2, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 3 to 9, amended, and agreed to.

Amendment moved—

"At end of Clause 9 to insert, as a new clause: 'Nothing in this Act shall be construed as imposing a duty on a school authority to receive in a special class or school established by them any child who (a) is resident in, or in their opinion properly belongs to, the district of another school authority; or (b) is resident in a workhouse or in any institution to which it has been sent by the guardians from a workhouse, or boarded out by the guardians, unless that other school authority, or, as the case may be, the guardians, are willing to contribute towards the expenses of the education and maintenance of the child such sum as may be agreed upon between the authorities concerned.'—(*The Lord President of the Council*.)

On Question, "That this clause be here inserted," agreed to.

Remaining clauses agreed to, with Amendments; Bill recommitted to the Standing Committee; and to be printed as amended. (No. 150.)

Commons and Open Spaces Bill [Lords]—House to be in Committee on Tuesday next.

QUESTIONS.**THE RE-HOUSING OF DISPLACED PERSONS.***The Earl of Hardwicke* ... 1128**PROTECTION OF PLOVERS' EGGS**—Question, *The Duke of Northumberland*;Answer, *Lord Belper* ... 1129

House adjourned at a quarter before Six of the clock.

COMMONS: FRIDAY, 30TH JUNE 1899.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [Lords] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH)—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz. :—Great Eastern Railway (General Powers) Bill [Lords]; North Staffordshire Railway Bill [Lords]. Ordered, that the Bills be read a second time 1130

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS [Lords] (STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERETO COMPLIED WITH)—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz. :—

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 11) Bill [Lords]—Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time upon Monday next 1131

South-Eastern Railway Bill—Lords Amendments considered and agreed to 1131

St. James's and Pall-Mall Electric Light Bill—Lords Amendments to be considered upon Tuesday next 1131

Inverness Harbour Bill [Lords]—Queen's Consent signified. Read the third time and passed, with Amendments 1131

Cobham Gas Bill [Lords]; Stretford Gas Bill [Lords]—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 1131

Millwall Dock Bill—Ordered, That Standing Orders 84, 214, 215, and 239 be suspended, and that the Bill be now taken into consideration provided amended prints shall have been previously deposited.—(*Dr. Farquharson.*) Bill, as amended, considered accordingly. Ordered, That Standing Orders 223 and 243 be suspended, and that the Bill be now read the third time.—(*Dr. Farquharson.*) Bill read the third time accordingly, and passed ... 1131

West Metropolitan Railway Bill—Ordered, That Standing Orders 84, 214, 215, and 239 be suspended, and that the Bill be now taken into consideration provided amended prints shall have been previously deposited.—(*Dr. Farquharson.*) Bill, as amended, considered accordingly. Ordered, That Standing Orders 223 and 243 be suspended, and that the Bill be now read the third time.—(*Dr. Farquharson.*) Bill read the third time accordingly, and passed 1131

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 10) Bill [Lords]—Read the second time, and committed 1132

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Housing of the Working Classes) Bill—Ordered, That the Order of 6th June referring the Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Housing of Working Classes) Bill to a Committee be read, and discharged. Ordered, that the Bill be withdrawn.—(*Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland*) 1132

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Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 10) Bill —Reported, with an Amended Title [Provisional Order relating to Bradford (Yorks), not confirmed; remaining Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table. Bill, as amended, to be considered upon Monday next	1132
Brighton Marine Palace and Pier Bill [Lords]—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed	1132
Lowestoft Water and Gas Bill [Lords]—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed	1132
Great Grimsby Street Tramways Bill [Lords]—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed	1132
All Saints' Church (Cardiff) Bill [Lords]—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table... ..	1132
Yorke Estate Bill [Lords]—Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. Bill to be read the third time	1132
Kirkcaldy Corporation and Tramways Bill [Lords]; Paisley and Barrhead District Railway Bill [Lords]—Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed	1132
Birmingham, North Warwickshire, and Stratford-upon-Avon Railway Bill [Lords]—Report [29th June] from the Select Committee on Standing Orders read. Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.—(<i>Dr. Farquharson.</i>)	1133
Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill —Lords Amendments to be considered upon Monday next	1133

PETITIONS.

POOR LAW AMENDMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1845 —Petition from Alness, for alteration of law; to lie upon the Table	1133
Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Bill —Petition from Kinghorn, in favour; to lie upon the Table	1133

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

ROYAL NIGER COMPANY —Copy presented,—Of Letter from the Foreign Office to the Treasury, dated 15th June, 1899, with respect to the revocation of the Charter of the Royal Niger Company, and to the taking over by Her Majesty's Government of the administrative rights and powers of the Company; together with copies of the Treasury Minute on the subject, dated 30th June, 1899, and relative Schedules [by Command]; to lie upon the Table	1133
WOODS, FORESTS, AND LAND REVENUES —Copy presented,—Of Seventy-seventh Report of the Commissioners; dated 29th June, 1899 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 257.)	1133
FINANCE ACCOUNTS —Copy presented,—Of Finance Accounts of the United Kingdom for the year ended 31st March, 1899 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 258.)	1133

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CIVIL LIST PENSIONS—Copy presented,—Of List of all Pensions granted during the year ended 20th June, 1899, and charged upon the Civil List [by Act], to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 259.) ... 1134

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACTS (EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN OVERTIME IN WASHING BOTTLES, &c.)—Copy presented,—of Order of Secretary of State for the Home Department extending to Factories and Workshops in which the Washing of Bottles for use in the Preserving of Fruit is carried on, the Special Exception (Employment of Women Overtime) [by Act]; to lie upon the Table ... 1134

ARMY COMMISSIONS—Address for "Return of the number of Commissions granted during each of the years 1885 to 1898, inclusive, specifying the numbers granted from the ranks (a) as Second Lieutenants; (b) as Quartermasters and Riding-Masters; and also the number granted from other sources in (1) Engineers and Artillery; (2) Cavalry; (3) Infantry; showing percentage of those given under (a) to those granted from other sources."—(Mr. Pirie.) ... 1134

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS—That they have agreed to: Fine or Imprisonment (Scotland and Ireland) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Orders No. 18) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 19) Bill; Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill, without Amendment.

That they have agreed to: Kensington and Notting Hill Electric Lighting Bill; Barry Railway Bill; Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (New Railways) Bill; Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (Various Powers) Bill, with Amendments.

Amendments to—Barton-on-Sea Water Bill [Lords]; Lanarkshire (Middle Ward District) Water Bill [Lords], without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to Amend Section 20 of The Parish of Manchester Division Act, 1850," [Manchester Canonries Bill [Lords].

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confirm an Agreement between the Fylde Waterworks Company and the Fylde Water Board for the Sale and purchase of the Company's undertaking, to Consolidate and Amend the Acts relating to the Company; and for other purposes." [Fylde Water Board Bill [Lords] ... 1134

Fylde Water Board Bill [Lords]—Read the first time, and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills ... 1135

QUESTIONS.

WAR OFFICE ESTABLISHMENT—Question, Mr. Moon (St. Pancras, N.); Answer, The Under Secretary of State for War (Mr. Wyndham, Dover) ... 1135

FORT GEORGE WATER SUPPLY—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, The Under Secretary of State for War (Mr. Wyndham, Dover)... 1135

UNDER-AGE RECRUITS—Question, Mr. Pirie (Aberdeen, N.); Answer, The Under Secretary of State for War (Mr. Wyndham, Dover) ... 1135

THE MILITARY WORKS LOAN ACT, 1897—Question, Mr. Pirie (Aberdeen, N.); Answer, The Under Secretary of State for War (Mr. Wyndham, Dover)... 1136

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FRENCH SETTLEMENT AT SHANGHAI —Question, Lord Charles Beresford (York); Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford)	1141
THE SINKING OF THE "KOW SHING" —Question, Lord Charles Beresford (York); Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford)	1142
HERRING TRADE WITH ST. PETERSBURG —Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford)	1142
BARRACLOUGH V. THE BISHOP OF ST. HELENA —Question, Sir Cameron Gull (Devonshire, Barnstaple); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. J. Chamberlain, Birmingham, W.)	1143
LOCAL WATER SUPPLIES —Question, Mr. Thomas Bayley (Derbyshire, Chesterfield); Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chaplin, Lincolnshire, Sleaford)	1144
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INVER WATER SUPPLY —Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. A. Graham Murray, Buteshire)	1145
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CREWS OF SCOTTISH FISHERY CRUISERS—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. A. Graham Murray, Buteshire)	1146
RE-HOUSING OF DISPLACED PERSONS—Questions, Mr. Talbot (Oxford University), Sir Mancherjee Bhownagree (Bethnal Green, N.E.), and Mr. Pickersgill (Bethnal Green, S.W.); Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sir M. White Ridley, Lancashire, Blackpool) ...	1146
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SEATS IN KEW GARDENS—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, The First Commissioner of Works (Mr. Akers-Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's)	1149
COLLECTORS OF CUSTOMS—Question, Sir Charles Cameron (Glasgow, Bridgeton); Answer, The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hanbury, Preston)	1149
TELEGRAPHIC CHARGES — Question, Mr. R. G. Webster (St. Pancras, E.); Answer, The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Hanbury, Preston)	1150
PROMOTION OF IRISH SCHOOL TEACHERS—Question, Mr. Macaleese (Monaghan, N.); Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. G. W. Balfour, Leeds, Central)	1150
MEDICINES, &C., FOR IRISH WORKHOUSE HOSPITALS—Question, Mr. Macaleese (Monaghan, N.); Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. G. W. Balfour, Leeds, Central)	1151
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ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—Question, Mr. Macaleese (Monaghan, N.); Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. G. W. Balfour, Leeds, Central)	1153
BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—Questions, General Russell (Cheltenham), Mr. Asquith (Fife, E.), Sir Charles Cameron (Glasgow, Bridgeton), Sir H. H. Fowler (Wolverhampton), and Mr. Davitt (Mayo, S.); Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.)	1153
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THE TRANSVAAL — Questions, Mr. Samuel Smith (Flintshire), Mr. Davitt (Mayo, S.), and Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.); Answers, The First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.)	1155

PUBLIC BUSINESS.

ROYAL NIGER COMPANY (CONSOLIDATED FUND)—Committee to consider of authorising the issue, out of the Consolidated Fund, of sums to be paid in connection with the revocation of the Charter of the Royal Niger Company (Queen's Recommendation signified), upon Monday next.—(<i>The Chancellor of the Exchequer.</i>)	1156
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SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES)—Mr. WODEHOUSE reported from the Committee of Selection; that they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure—Mr. Woods; and had appointed in substitution, Mr. Humphreys-Owen.

Mr. WODEHOUSE further reported from the Committee; that they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures—Mr. Bryce; and had appointed in substitution, Mr. James Stuart. Reports to lie upon the Table. ... 1156

GOVERNMENT OF SCOTLAND—Bill to amend the provision for the future Government of Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Pirie, Mr. Birrell, Sir Charles Cameron, Dr. Clark, Dr. Farquharson, Mr. M'Crae, Mr. Edmund Robertson, Mr. Thomas Shaw, Sir Thomas Esmonde, Mr. Lloyd-George, and Mr. Moulton ... 1156

Government of Scotland Bill—"To amend the provision for the future Government of Scotland," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 26th July, and to be printed. (Bill 254.) ... 1156

SUPPLY [17TH ALLOTTED DAY]—Considered in Committee.

CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES, 1899-1900.

CLASS I.

1. £29,936, to complete the sum for Railways, Ireland.

CLASS II.

2. £2,797, to complete the sum for Household of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

DISCUSSION:—

<i>Mr. Swift MacNeill (Donegal, S.)</i> ...	<i>Mr. Davitt (Mayo, E.)</i> ...	1157	1159
<i>The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. G. W. Balfour, Leeds, Central)</i> ...		1158	

Vote agreed to

3. £1,229, to complete the sum for Charitable Donations and Bequests Office, Ireland.

<i>Mr. Flynn (Cork, N.)</i>	1159
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Vote agreed to.

4. £3,900, to complete the sum for Public Record Office, Ireland.

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DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. Swift MacNeill</i> ...	1160	<i>Lord Charles Beresford (York)</i> ...	1171
<i>Mr. G. W. Balfour</i> ...	1161	<i>Mr. G. W. Balfour</i> ...	1171
<i>Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.)</i> ...	1162	<i>Mr. T. P. O'Connor (Liverpool,</i>	
<i>Mr. Hemphill (Tyrone, N.)</i> ...	1165	<i>Scotland)</i> ...	1172
<i>Mr. Flynn (Cork, N.)</i> ...	1166	<i>Mr. Arnold-Forster (Belfast, W.)</i> ...	1173
<i>Mr. Lecky (Dublin Uni-</i>		<i>Mr. Bryce (Aberdeen, S.)</i> ...	1174
<i>versity)</i> ...	1167	<i>Sir T. Esmonde (Kerry, W.)</i> ...	1176
<i>Mr. Swift MacNeill</i> ...	1168	<i>Mr. Dillon</i> ...	1176
<i>Mr. G. W. Balfour</i> ...	1168	<i>Mr. Rentoul (Down, E.)</i> ...	1177
<i>Mr. Swift MacNeill</i> ...	1169	<i>Mr. Dillon</i> ...	1177
<i>Mr. Asquith (Fife, E.)</i> ...	1170		

Vote agreed to.

5. £12,113, to complete the sum for Registrar-General's Office, Ireland.

6. £7,071, to complete the sum for Valuation and Boundary Survey, Ireland.

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Sir T. Esmonde</i> ...	1178	<i>Sir T. Esmonde</i> ...	1179
<i>The Financial Secretary to</i>		<i>Mr. Flynn</i> ...	1179
<i>the Treasury (Mr. Han-</i>		<i>Sir James Haslett (Belfast, N.)</i> ...	1180
<i>bury, Preston)</i> ...	1178	<i>Mr. Dillon</i> ...	1180

Vote agreed to.

7. £24,739, to complete the Public Works Office, Ireland.

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Sir T. Esmonde</i> ...	1181	<i>Mr. Dillon</i> ...	1190
<i>Mr. Hanbury</i> ...	1181	<i>Mr. William Johnston (Belfast,</i>	
<i>Mr. Michael Austin (Limerick,</i>		<i>S.)</i> ...	1190
<i>W.)</i> ...	1183	<i>Mr. William Moore (Antrim, N.)</i> ...	1191
<i>Mr. G. W. Balfour</i> ...	1184	<i>Mr. Davitt</i> ...	1191
<i>Mr. Dillon</i> ...	1184	<i>Sir T. Esmonde</i> ...	1192
<i>Mr. Hanbury</i> ...	1188	<i>Mr. Hemphill</i> ...	1192
<i>Mr. Hemphill (Tyrone, N.)</i> ...	1188	<i>Mr. William Moore</i> ...	1193
<i>Mr. Flynn</i> ...	1189	<i>Mr. Davitt</i> ...	1193
<i>Mr. T. D. Sullivan (Donegal,</i>			
<i>W.)</i> ...	1189		

Vote agreed to.

CLASS IV.

8. £21,724, to complete the sum for Scientific Investigation, &c.

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Sir T. G. Esmonde</i> ...	1194	<i>The First Lord of the Treasury</i>	
		<i>(Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manches-</i>	
		<i>ter, E.)</i> ...	1194

Vote agreed to

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Resolution to be reported :—

CLASS II.

Motion made, and Question proposed—

"That a sum, not exceeding £27,479, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on 31st day of March, 1900, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Local Government Board in Ireland."

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. T. D. Sullivan</i> ...	1194	<i>Mr. Hemphill</i> ...	1214
<i>Mr. G. W. Balfour</i> ...	1197	<i>Mr. T. P. O'Connor</i> ...	1217
<i>Mr. Murnaghan (Tyrone, Mid)</i> ...	1198	<i>Mr. William Moore</i> ...	1218
<i>Mr. William Johnston</i> ...	1200	<i>Mr. Swift MacNeill</i> ...	1219
<i>Mr. Davitt</i> ...	1203	<i>Mr. G. W. Balfour</i> ...	1220
<i>Mr. Dillon</i> ...	1204	<i>Mr. Dillon</i> ...	1222
<i>Sir Walter Foster (Derbyshire, Ilkeston)</i> ...	1209	<i>Mr. Rentoul</i> ...	1222
<i>Mr. G. W. Balfour</i> ...	1211	<i>Mr. G. W. Balfour</i> ...	1224
		<i>Mr. McDermott (Kilkenny, N.)</i> ...	1227

It being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolutions to be reported upon Monday next; Committee also report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

Adjourned at five minutes after Twelve of the clock.

LORDS: MONDAY, 3RD JULY 1899.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with: London, Walthamstow, and Epping Forest Railway (No. 2.) The same was ordered to lie on the Table ... 1229

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE—Report from, that the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the following Bills, viz: London United Tramways; Derwent Valley Water, ought to be dispensed with, and the Bills allowed to proceed. Read, and agreed to ... 1229

London, Walthamstow, and Epping Forest Railway (No. 2) Bill—Examiners' Certificates of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Monday next ... 1229

Rochdale Canal Bill [Lords]—Committee to meet To-morrow ... 1229

Ionian Bank Bill—Committee to meet on Thursday next ... 1229

Dundee Gas, Street Improvements, and Tramways Bill [Lords]—Commons Amendments considered, and agreed to ... 1229

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London Government Bill—Amendments reported (according to Order).

Clause 4 :—

Verbal Amendments agreed to.

Clause 6 :—

Drafting Amendments agreed to.

Clause 8 :—

Amendment moved—

“ In page 6, line 30, to leave out ‘ on the recommendation of,’ and insert, ‘ after consideration of a report thereon by.’ ”—(*The Duke of Northumberland.*)

DISCUSSION :—

<i>The Marquess of Ripon</i> ...	1234	<i>Earl Spencer</i> ...	...	1235
<i>The Lord President of the</i>		<i>The Earl of Northbrook</i>...	...	1235
<i>Council (The Duke of</i>		<i>The Earl of Kimberley</i> ...	...	1236
<i>Devonshire)</i> ...	1235	<i>The Duke of Northumberland</i> ...	...	1236

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Drafting Amendments agreed to.

Amendment moved—

“ In page 6, line 38, after ‘ incurred,’ insert, ‘ Provided that the foregoing provisions shall not apply to payments made in pursuance of a precept from another authority.’ ”—(*The Lord President of the Council.*)

On Question, “ That these words be here inserted,” agreed to.

Clause 10 :—

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Lord Monkswell</i>	1237	<i>The Duke of Devonshire</i> ...	1237
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Clause 16 :—

Amendment moved—

“ In page 10, line 31, after ‘ 1894,’ to insert, ‘ or Acts relating to commons and open spaces.’ ”—(*The Lord Monkswell.*)

<i>The Duke of Devonshire</i>	1238
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Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment moved—

“ In page 11, line 18, after ‘ Gazette,’ insert, ‘ and in such other manner as the Committee of Council may direct, of a draft scheme having been prepared or’; line 21, after the first ‘ the,’ insert, ‘ draft scheme or,’ and after ‘ Gazette,’ insert, ‘ or in the manner required by the Seventh Schedule to the Municipal Corporations Act, 1882.’ ”—(*The Lord President of the Council.*)

On Question, “ That these words be here inserted,” agreed to.

Drafting Amendment agreed to.

Clause 18 :—

Amendment proposed—

“ In page 11, to leave out lines 39 to 42, and insert, ‘ Provided that—(a) The foregoing provisions of this section shall not apply to the hamlet of Knightsbridge; and (b) If the Commissioners under this Act make a special report to Parliament that, by reason of anything done under any of the adoptive Acts or for any other exceptional reason, it is impracticable to deal with a detached part of a parish in manner required by the foregoing provisions of this section, those provisions shall not apply.’ ”—(*The Lord President of the Council.*)

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DISCUSSION :—

<i>The Earl of Kimberley</i> ...	1241	<i>The Earl of Kimberley</i> ...	1242
<i>The Duke of Devonshire</i> ...	1241	<i>The Duke of Devonshire</i> ...	1242
<i>The Duke of Westminster</i> ...	1241		

On Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause," resolved in the negative.

On Question "That the words proposed to be inserted stand part of the clause," agreed to.

Drafting Amendment agreed to.

Amendment moved—

"In page 12, line 15, after 'shall,' to insert, 'save as hereinafter excepted.'"
—(*The Lord Monkswell*.)

DISCUSSION :—

<i>The Earl of Jersey</i> ...	1243	<i>Lord Monkswell</i> ...	1244
<i>The Earl of Kimberley</i> ...	1244	<i>The Duke of Devonshire</i> ...	1244

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Verbal Amendments agreed to.

Clause 20 :—

Amendment moved, to insert as a new clause—

"An Order in Council under this Act may detach Kensington Palace from the borough of Westminster, and attach it to the borough of Kensington."—(*The Duke of Northumberland*.)

<i>The Duke of Devonshire</i> ...	1245
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On Question, "That this clause be here inserted," agreed to.

Clause 22 :—

<i>The Duke of Devonshire</i> ...	1245
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Amendment moved—

"After Clause 23, to insert as a new clause, 'The members of borough councils, borough treasurers, and town clerks, during the time that they hold office under this Act, shall enjoy exemption from service on all juries.'—(*The Earl of Portsmouth*)—

<i>The Duke of Devonshire</i> ...	1246
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Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause 25 :—

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 25, page 14, lines 31 and 35, to leave out 'Local Government Board' and insert, 'London County Council.'—(*The Lord Tweedmouth*.)

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Lord James of Hereford</i> ...	1247	<i>The Earl of Kimberley</i> ...	1248
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On Question, whether the words proposed to be left out shall stand part of the clause, their Lordships divided :—Contents, 98 ; Not-Contents, 26.

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DISCUSSION :—

The Duke of Westminster ... 1249 *The Duke of Devonshire* ... 1249

First Schedule :—

Amendment moved,

"In the First Schedule, in page 20, line 15, after 'Works,' to insert, 'including the Tower of London and the Liberties thereof.'"—(*The Lord Tweedmouth.*)

The Duke of Devonshire 1249

On Question, "That those words be here inserted," agreed to.

Amendment moved—

"In line 17, to leave out 'the district of the Wandsworth Board of Works,' and insert, 'the area consisting of the parishes of Wandsworth and Putney. The area consisting of the parishes of Clapham, Streatham, and Tooting'; and in line 29, to leave out 'of the ancient Parliamentary borough of Westminster.'"—(*The Lord Tweedmouth.*)

DISCUSSION :—

The Duke of Devonshire ... 1252 *The Earl of Kimberley* ... 1252

On Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause," agreed to.

Amendment moved—

"In the First Schedule, page 20, line 29, to leave out from 'The area of the' to the end of line 33, and insert 'parishes of Saint Margaret and Saint John, Westminster, and the parish of Saint George, Hanover Square. The area of the parish of Saint James, Westminster, the parish of Saint Martin-in-the-Fields, and the district of the Strand Board of Works.'"—(*The Lord Hawkesbury.*)

DISCUSSION :—

Lord Hobhouse ... 1257 *The Earl of Kimberley* ... 1261
The Duke of Devonshire ... 1259

On Question, Whether the words proposed to be left out shall stand part of the schedule, their Lordships divided :—Contents, 74; Not-Contents, 22.

Bill to be read the third time To-morrow.

Summary Jurisdiction Act (1879) Amendment Bill—House in Committee (according to Order): Bill reported without Amendment; and re-committed to the Standing Committee ... 1263

Education of Children Bill—House in Committee (according to Order): Bill reported without Amendment; and re-committed to the Standing Committee ... 1263

Isolation Hospitals (Amendment) Bill [Lords]—Read the third time (according to Order); Amendments made; Bill passed, and sent to the Commons ... 1263

House adjourned at fifteen minutes past Seven of the clock.

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COMMONS: MONDAY, 3RD JULY 1899.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [Lords] —(STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH)—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, that, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.: Hastings Harbour Bill [Lords]; Wolverhampton Corporation Bill [Lords]. Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time 1263
PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS [Lords] —(STANDING ORDERS APPLICABLE THERE-TO COMPLIED WITH)—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, that, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz.: Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 14) Bill [Lords]; Electric Lighting Provisional Order (No. 15) Bill [Lords]; Gas and Water Orders Confirmation Bill [Lords]; Gas Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [Lords]; Water Orders Confirmation Bill [Lords]. Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time To-morrow 1264
Fishguard Water and Gas Bill —Lords Amendments considered, and agreed to 1264
Bury Corporation Bill [Lords]; Bury Corporation Water Bill [Lords] —Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments 1265
Church Stretton Water Bill [Lords] —As amended, considered; Amend-ments made; Bill to be read the third time... .. 1265
Great Yarmouth Pier Bill [Lords] —As amended, considered; to be read the third time 1265
Liverpool Overhead Railway Bill [Lords] —As amended, considered; an Amendment made; Bill to be read the third time 1265
St. Neots Water Bill [Lords] —As amended, considered; an Amendment made; Bill to be read the third time 1265
Warrington Corporation Bill —As amended, considered; to be read the third time 1265
Aberdeen Joint Passenger Station Bill [Lords]; Caledonian Railway (General Powers) Bill [Lords]; Manchester Corporation Tramways Bill [Lords]; South Staffordshire Tramways Bill [Lords]; Owens College, Manchester, Bill [Lords]; Wolverhampton Tramways Bill [Lords] —Read a second time, and committed... .. 1265
Mersey Docks and Harbour Board (Finance) Bill [Lords] (Stamp Duties) —Committee to consider of authorising the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board to enter into agreements with the Inland Revenue for the composition of transfers of their stocks (Queen's Recommendation signified), upon Wednesday.—(Dr. Farquharson.) 1265

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Newcastle-upon-Tyne Tramways and Improvement Bill—

Motion made, and Question proposed—

"That the Order of the House of 14th April 1899, That, in the case of Bills reported from the Committee on Police and Sanitary Regulations, three days shall intervene between the date when the Report of the Committee is circulated with the Votes and the Consideration of the Bill, be suspended in the case of the Newcastle-upon-Tyne Tramways and Improvement Bill."—(*Dr. Farquharson.*)

DISCUSSION :—

Mr. J. W. Lowther (*Cumberland, Penrith*) ... 1266
Dr. Farquharson (*Aberdeenshire, W.*) ... 1266

Mr. J. E. Ellis (*Nottingham, Rushcliffe*) ... 1266

Question put, and agreed to.

Ordered, That Standing Orders, 84, 214, 215, and 239 be suspended, and that the Bill be now taken into consideration, provided amended prints shall have been previously deposited.—(*Dr. Farquharson.*)

Bill, as amended, considered accordingly.

Ordered, That Standing Orders 223 and 243 be suspended, and that the Bill be now read the third time.—(*Dr. Farquharson.*)

(*Queen's Consent signified.*)—Bill read the third time accordingly, and passed ... 1266

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill—Lords Amendments considered, and agreed to ... 1266

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 17) Bill—Read the third time, and passed ... 1267

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 10) Bill—As amended, considered ; read the third time, and passed... 1267

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 11) Bill [Lords]—Read a second time, and committed ... 1267

Oldham Corporation Bill [Lords]—Reported, with Amendments ; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed ... 1267

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES)—*Mr. HALSEY* reported from the Committee of Selection, That they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure : *Sir George Fardell*, *Mr. Gedge*, and *Captain Norton* ; and had appointed in substitution *Mr. Evelyn Cecil*, *Mr. William Jones*, and *Mr. Arthur Morton*. *Mr. HALSEY* further reported from the Committee that they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping and Manufactures : *Sir Edward Hill* and *Sir James Rankin* ; and had appointed in substitution *Mr. Galloway* and *Mr. Gedge* ... 1267

Reports to lie upon the Table.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS—That they have agreed to :—*Shirebrook and District Gas Bill* ; *Nottingham Corporation Bill* ; *London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Bill* ; *Belfast Water Bill* ; *West Middlesex Water Bill* ; and *Central Electric Supply Bill*, with Amendments.

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That they have agreed to—Amendments to:—Airdrie and Coatbridge Water Bill [Lords]; Gainsborough Urban District Council (Gas) Bill [Lords]; and Wick and Pulteney Harbours Bill [Lords], without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, “An Act to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade, under the Tramways Act, 1870, relating to Audenshaw Urban District Tramways, Clayton Tramways, Eccles Corporation Tramways, Ilkeston Corporation Tramways, Queensbury Tramway, and Southport Corporation Tramways.” [Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2.) Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill, intituled, “An Act to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade, under the Tramways Act, 1870, relating to Barking Town Urban District Tramways, Blackpool Corporation Tramways, Dudley and Wolverhampton Tramways, Gravesend, Rosherville, and Northfleet Tramways, Ilford Urban District Tramways, and Wrexham District Tramways.” [Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 3) Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill, intituled, “An Act to extend the time for the completion of the authorised pier and works of the Weston-super-Mare Grand Pier Company; and for other purposes.” [Weston-super-Mare Grand Pier Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill intituled, “An Act for extending the limits of the borough of Workington, and for making further and better provision in regard to the water supply thereof.” [Workington Corporation Bill [Lords].

And, also, a Bill, intituled, “An Act to consolidate the parishes within the county borough of Portsmouth, and to confer further powers on the Corporation of Portsmouth; and for other purposes.” [Portsmouth Corporation Bill [Lords] ... 1268

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [Lords]—Read the first time; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. (Bill 255.) ... 1268

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 3) Bill [Lords]—Read the first time; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. (Bill 256.) ... 1268

Weston-super-Mare Grand Pier Bill [Lords]; Workington Corporation Bill [Lords]; Portsmouth Corporation Bill [Lords]—Read the first time, and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills ... 1269

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BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (CHEDDAR CHEESE MAKING)—Copy presented,—of Report on the Results of Investigations into Cheddar Cheese Making, carried out on behalf of the Bath and West and Southern Counties Society, in the years 1891–8, by F. J. Lloyd, F.C.S., F.I.C. [by Command] ; to lie upon the Table... ..	1269
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ROYAL NIGER COMPANY (CONSOLIDATED FUND).

Considered in Committee.

Motion made, and Question proposed—

“That it is expedient to authorise the issue, out of the Consolidated Fund, of sums not exceeding £865,000, and for the purpose of providing for any such issue, to borrow, by means of terminable annuities charged on and paid out of moneys annually provided by Parliament for foreign and colonial services, and if these moneys are insufficient, out of the Consolidated Fund, any sum not exceeding £820,000 for making payments to the Royal Niger Company, in consideration of the transfer to the Crown of the administrative powers of the said company, together with their treaty and other rights, property, and for meeting the expenditure rendered necessary by such transfer.”—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman</i> (<i>Stirling Burghs</i>) ...	1300	<i>Commander Bethell</i> (<i>York, East Riding, Holderness</i>) ...	1305
<i>Mr. Labouchere</i> (<i>Northampton</i>) ...	1301	<i>Dr. Clark</i> (<i>Caithness</i>)...	1306
<i>Mr. Dillon</i> (<i>Mayo, E.</i>) ...	1302	<i>Mr. W. F. Lawrence</i> (<i>Liverpool, Abercromby</i>) ...	1306
<i>Sir Charles Dilke</i> (<i>Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean</i>) ...	1304	<i>Mr. Warner</i> (<i>Staffordshire, Lichfield</i>) ...	1306
<i>The Chancellor of the Exchequer</i> (<i>Sir M. Hicks-Beach, Bristol, W.</i>) ...	1304	<i>Sir M. Hicks-Beach</i> ...	1306
<i>Mr. J. E. Ellis</i> (<i>Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe</i>)...	1305	<i>Mr. Moon</i> (<i>St. Pancras, N.</i>) ...	1306
<i>Mr. Sydney Buxton</i> (<i>Tower Hamlets, Stepney</i>) ...	1305	<i>Mr. Gibson Bowles</i> (<i>Lynn Regis</i>)..	1307
		<i>Mr. T. P. O'Connor</i> (<i>Liverpool, Scotland</i>) ...	1307
		<i>Mr. Gibson Bowles</i> ...	1308
		<i>Mr. Dillon</i> ...	1308

Question put, “That the Chairman report progress, and ask leave to sit again.”

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 123 ; Noes, 192. (Division List, No. 211.)

DISCUSSION RESUMED :—

<i>Mr. T. P. O'Connor</i> ...	1313	<i>Mr. Dalziel</i> (<i>Kirkcaldy Burghs</i>)	1321
<i>Dr. Clark</i> ...	1315	<i>Mr. Logan</i> (<i>Leicester, Harborough</i>)	1323
<i>Sir M. Hicks-Beach</i> ...	1316	<i>Sir F. T. Mappin</i> (<i>York, W.R., Hallamshire</i>) ...	1324
<i>Mr. Dillon</i> ...	1317	<i>Mr. W. Allan</i> (<i>Gateshead</i>) ...	1324
<i>Mr. Thomas Bayley</i> (<i>Derbyshire, Chesterfield</i>) ...	1318	<i>Sir M. Hicks-Beach</i> ...	1324
<i>Mr. Labouchere</i> ...	1319	<i>Mr. T. P. O'Connor</i> ...	1326

Question put, “That the question be now put.”

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 216 ; Noes, 116. (Division List, No. 212.)

Original Question put accordingly.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 223 ; Noes, 101. (Division List, No. 213.)

Resolved, that it is expedient to authorise the issue, out of the Consolidated Fund, of sums not exceeding £865,000, and, for the purpose of providing money for such issue, the borrowing, by means of terminable annuities charged on and paid out of the moneys annually provided by Parliament for Foreign and Colonial Services, and, if those moneys are insufficient, out of the Consolidated Fund, a sum of not exceeding £820,000, for making payments to the Royal Niger Company, in consideration of the transfer to the Crown of the Administrative powers of the said Company, together with their treaty and other rights and property, and for meeting expenditure rendered necessary by such transfer.

Resolution to be reported To-morrow.

Small Houses (Acquisition of Ownership) Bill—As amended (by the Standing Committee), further considered.

Amendment proposed—

“In page 5, line 40, to leave out the words ‘and containing,’ and insert the words, ‘or of any rural district, containing respectively,’—(*Colonel Milward*)—instead thereof.”

Question proposed, “That the words ‘and containing’ stand part of the Bill.”

DISCUSSION :—

Sir Charles Dilke (*Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean*) ... 1332
The Secretary of State for the Colonies (*Mr. J. Chamberlain, Birmingham, W.*) ... 1333

Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice (*Wilts, Cricklade*) 1333

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 96 ; Noes, 188. (Division List, No. 214.)

Amendment proposed—

“In page 6, line 1, to leave out the word ‘seven,’ and insert the word ‘five,’ instead thereof.”—(*Mr. Strachey*.)

Question proposed, “That the word ‘seven’ stand part of the Bill.”

DISCUSSION :—

Mr. J. Chamberlain ... 1337
Mr. Warner (*Stafford, Lichfield*) 1337

Mr. McLaren (*Leicestershire, Bosworth*) 1337
Mr. McKenna (*Monmouth, N.*) ... 1338

The House divided :—Ayes, 168 ; Noes, 90. (Division List, No. 215.)

Other Amendments made.

Amendment proposed—

“In page 6, line 6, after the first word ‘county,’ to insert the words ‘as a special purpose.’”—(*Sir Edward Sassoon*.)

Question proposed, “That those words be there inserted.”

DISCUSSION :—

The Solicitor-General (*Sir R. B. Finlay, Inverness Burghs*) 1342

Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice ... 1342
Mr. McKenna 1342

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Other Amendments made.

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Amendment proposed—

"In page 6, line 9, at end, to insert, 'but no sum shall be raised in any urban or rural district the council of which becomes a local authority for the purposes of this Act on account of the expenses of a county council under this Act.'"—(*Mr. Secretary Chamberlain.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Sir Charles Dilke</i> ...	... 1343	<i>Mr. R. Wallace (Perth)</i>...	... 1344
<i>Mr. J. Chamberlain</i> ...	... 1344	<i>Mr. McLaren</i> ...	... 1345

Question put, and agreed to.

Other Amendments made.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 6, line 19, after the word 'sum,' to insert the words, 'rateable value,' shall include the value of the Government property upon which a contribution in lieu of rates is paid."—(*Colonel Hughes.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. J. Chamberlain</i> ...	... 1345	<i>Mr. M'Kenna</i> ...	... 1347
<i>Colonel Hughes (Woolwich)</i> .	1346	<i>Mr. J. Chamberlain</i> ...	... 1347
<i>Mr. Sydney Gedge (Walsall)</i>	1346		

Question put, and negatived.

Other Amendments made.

Attention called to the fact that forty Members were not present ; House counted, and forty Members being found present :—

Amendment proposed—

"In page 7, line 23, after the word 'shall' to insert the word 'not.'"—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'not' be inserted."

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. Galloway (Manchester, S.W.)</i> ...	... 1350	<i>Mr. Dalziel (Kirkcaldy Burghs)</i> ...	1352
<i>The Lord Advocate (Mr. A. G. Murray, Buteshire)</i> ...	1351		

The House divided :—Ayes, 48 ; Noes, 130. (Division List, No. 216.)

Other Amendments made.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 10, line 29, after the words 'seven thousand,' to insert the words, 'in so far as the same relates to the council of any rural district, and in the case of the council of any urban district three thousand.'"—(*Mr. William Moore.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

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DISCUSSION :—

<i>The Attorney-General for Ireland (Mr. Atkinson, Londonderry) ...</i>	1355	<i>Mr. McLaren ...</i>	1358
<i>Mr. Wolff (Belfast, E.) ...</i>	1356	<i>Colonel Milward (Warwick, Stratford-on-Avon) ...</i>	1359
<i>Mr. Hemphill (Tyrone, N.) ...</i>	1356	<i>Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.) ...</i>	1359
<i>Mr. Galloway ...</i>	1357	<i>Mr. Atkinson ...</i>	1359
		<i>Sir James Haslett (Belfast, N.) ...</i>	1360

The House divided :—Ayes, 84 ; Noes, 148. (Division List, No. 217.)

Other Amendments made.

Motion made, and Question proposed—

“That the Bill be re-committed in respect of Clause 12.”—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

Amendment proposed—

“After the word ‘Clause,’ to insert the words, ‘eight and Clause.’”—(*Mr. Sydney Gedge.*)

Question proposed, “That those words be there inserted.”

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. J. Chamberlain ...</i>	1364	<i>Mr. Helder (Whitehaven) ...</i>	1364
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Question put, and negatived.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill re-committed in respect of Clause 12.

Bill considered in Committee, and reported, with an Amendment ; as amended, considered ; to be read the third time To-morrow.

Military Works Bill—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, “That the Bill be now read a second time.”

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.) ...</i>	1365	<i>Lord Charles Beresford (York) ...</i>	1373
<i>The Under Secretary of State for War (Mr. Wyndham, Dover) ...</i>	1366	<i>Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs) ...</i>	1375
<i>Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis) ...</i>	1369	<i>Mr. Wyndham ...</i>	1379
		<i>Mr. Buchanan (Aberdeenshire, E.) ...</i>	1384

It being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

BOARD OF EDUCATION (SALARIES)—Considered in Committee.

Motion made, and Question proposed—

“That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of a salary, not exceeding £2,000, to the President of the Board of Education, and of salaries and remuneration to the secretaries, officers, and servants of the Board, in pursuance of any Act of the present session to provide for the establishment of a Board of Education for England and Wales.”—(*Sir John Gorst.*)

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DISCUSSION :—

<i>The Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education (Sir J. Gorst, Cambridge University) ...</i>	<i>Dr. Clark (Caithness) ...</i>	1386
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Committee report Progress ; to sit again To-morrow.

SUPPLY [30TH JUNE].—Resolutions reported—

CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES, 1899-1900.

CLASS I.

1. "That a sum, not exceeding £29,936, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, for payments under the Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act, 1883, the Light Railways (Ireland) Acts, 1889 and 1893, the Tramways (Ireland) Act, 1895, and the Railways (Ireland) Act, 1896."

CLASS II.

2. "That a sum, not exceeding £2,797, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Household of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland."

3. "That a sum, not exceeding £1,229, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests for Ireland."

4. "That a sum, not exceeding £3,900, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Public Record Office in Ireland, and of the Keeper of State Papers in Dublin."

5. "That a sum, not exceeding £12,113, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, for the Salaries and Expenses in the Department of the Registrar-General of Births, etc., and the Expenses of Collecting Agricultural and other Statistics in Ireland."

6. "That a sum, not exceeding £7,071, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, for the Salaries and Expenses of the General Valuation and Boundary Survey of Ireland."

7. "That a sum, not exceeding £24,739, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of Public Works in Ireland."

CLASS IV.

8. "That a sum, not exceeding £21,724, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, for sundry Grants in Aid of Scientific Investigation, etc., and other Grants"

Resolutions agreed to.

Metropolis Management Acts Amendment (Bye-Laws) Bill [Lords]—
Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 :—

Committee report Progress ; to sit again this day 1388

Reformatory Schools Amendment Bill [Lords]—Considered in Committee
and reported, without Amendment ; read the third time, and passed ... 1388

Agricultural Holdings Bill—Order for Second Reading read, and discharged :—Bill withdrawn 1388

Adjourned at a quarter after Twelve of the clock.

LORDS : TUESDAY, 4TH JULY 1899.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with :—Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 14) 1389

Also, the Certificate that no further Standing Orders are applicable to the following Bill :—Millwall Dock. The same were ordered to lie on the Table 1389

Dublin Corporation Bill—Witnesses ordered to attend the Select Committee 1389

Blackpool Improvement Bill ; Walker and Wallsend Union Gas (Electric Lighting) Bill ; Lowestoft Promenade Pier Bill—Committee to meet on Friday next 1389

City and Brixton Railway Bill ; Midland and South-Western Junction Railway Bill—Committee to meet on Thursday next ... 1389

Inverness Harbour Bill [Lords]—Commons Amendments considered, and agreed to, with an Amendment ; and Bill returned to the Commons ... 1389

Rochdale Canal Bill [Lords]—Reported, with Amendments... .. 1389

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Dublin Corporation Bill; Dublin Corporation (Markets) Bill —Leave given to the Select Committee not to sit To-morrow until Twelve of the clock	1389
London United Tramways Bill —Moved, That the Order made on the 9th day of March last, "That no Private Bill brought from the House of Commons shall be read a second time after Tuesday, the 27th day of June next," be dispensed with, and that the Bill be read a second time; agreed to; Bill read a second time accordingly, and committed	1390
Derwent Valley Water Bill —Moved, That the Order made on the 9th day of March last, "That no Private Bill brought from the House of Commons shall be read a second time after Tuesday, the 27th day of June next," be dispensed with, and that the Bill be read a second time; agreed to; Bill read a second time accordingly, and committed, the Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection	1390
Taff Vale Railway Bill —Read the third time, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons	1390
Warrington Corporation Bill —Brought from the Commons; read the first time, and referred to the Examiners... ..	1390
Reformatory Schools Amendment Bill [Lords]—Returned from the Commons, agreed to	1390
Fishguard Water and Gas Bill —Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to	1390
Bury Corporation Bill [Lords]; Bury Corporation Water Bill [Lords]—Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments	1390
London and South-Western Railway Bill [Lords]—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments	1390
Milton Creek Conservancy Bill —The Queen's Consent signified; and Bill reported, with Amendments	1390
Birmingham Corporation Bill —Reported with Amendments	1390
Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 11) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (Gas) Bill; Local Government Provisional Order (Housing of Working Classes) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (Poor Law) Bill —Read the third time (according to Order), and passed	1391
Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (Housing of Working Classes) (No 2) Bill —Read the third time (according to Order), and passed	1391

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Manchester Corporation (General Powers) Bill ; Darwen Corporation Bill ; London and North-Western (New Railways) Bill ; London and North-Western (Additional Powers) Bill ; Brompton and Piccadilly Circus Railway Bill ; Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill ; Worcestershire County Council Bill ; Derwent Valley Water Bill— Report from the Committee of Selection, that the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills ; viz. ; E. Abingdon, E. Lauderdale (Chairman), E. Mayo, L. Llangattock, L. Wandsworth ; agreed to ; and the said Lords appointed accordingly : the Committee to meet on Tuesday next, at Twelve o'clock ; and all petitions referred to the Committee with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bill to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bill ...	1391
Great Western and Great Central Railway Companies Bill — Leave given to the Select Committee not to sit again until Friday next ...	1392

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (1898–1899)— I. Associations constituted under the Voluntary Schools Act, 1879 ; II. Associated schools and amounts of aid-grant paid ; III. Unassociated schools and amounts of aid-grant paid ...	1392
RAILWAY ACCIDENTS— Returns of accidents and casualties as reported to the Board of Trade by the several railway companies of the United Kingdom during the three months ended 31st March 1899 ; in pursuance of the Regulation of Railways Act (1871), 34th and 35th Victoria, chap. 78 ; together with reports of the inspecting officers of the Railway Department to the Board of Trade upon certain accidents which were inquired into ...	1392
TRADE REPORTS (1899) ANNUAL SERIES— No. 2305. Roumania ; No. 2306. Turkey (Damascus) ; No. 2307. China (Cheefoo) ; No. 2308. China (Kin Kiang) ...	1392
LIQUOR LICENSING LAWS (ROYAL COMMISSION)— Final Report of Her Majesty's Commissioners appointed to inquire into the operation and administration of the laws relating to the sale of intoxicating liquors ; with a general index to the previous reports, evidence, &c. Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table ...	1392
COLONIAL FORTIFICATIONS ACT, 1877— Representations, dated 3rd July, 1899, of Secretary of State for the Colonies and Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury, that it is expedient that certain properties held in trust for the defence of the colony of New South Wales should be transferred to the Government of that colony ; and draft of an Order in Council for giving effect to above representations ...	1393
LAND REGISTRATION (ENGLAND)— Land Transfer Rules, June, 1899 ...	1393
CIVIL LIST PENSIONS— List of all pensions granted during the year ended 20th June, 1899, and charged upon the Civil List...	1393
SAVINGS BANKS AND FRIENDLY SOCIETIES (POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANKS FUND) (FRIENDLY SOCIETIES FUND)— Accounts for the year ended 31st December 1898. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table ...	139

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STANDING COMMITTEE—Report from the Committee of Selection for the Standing Committee, That the Committee have added the Lord Wandsworth to the Standing Committee; read, and ordered to lie on the Table ... 1393

Youthful Offenders Bill [Lords]—Reported from the Standing Committee, with Amendments: The Report thereof to be received on Thursday next; and Bill to be printed as amended. (No. 153.) ... 1392

Elementary Education (Defective and Epileptic Children) Bill [Lords]—Reported from the Standing Committee, with further Amendments: The Report of the Amendments made in Committee of the Whole House and by the Standing Committee to be received on Thursday next; and Bill to be printed, as amended. (No. 154.) ... 1393

Summary Jurisdiction Act (1879) Amendment Bill—Reported from the Standing Committee, with Amendments: The Report thereof to be received on Thursday next; and Bill to be printed, as amended. (No. 155.) ... 1394

Education of Children Bill—Reported from the Standing Committee, without Amendment, and to be read the third time on Thursday next ... 1394

Anchors and Chain Cables Bill—Read the third time (according to Order), with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons ... 1394

London Government Bill—Order of the Day for the Third Reading, read.

Moved—

“That the Bill be now read the third time.”—(*The Vice-President of the Council.*)

On Question, agreed to.

Bill read the third time accordingly, with the Amendments.

Drafting Amendments agreed to.

DISCUSSION:—

<i>The Marquess of Ripon</i> ... 1394	<i>The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury</i> ... 1395
<i>The Lord President of the Council (the Duke of Devonshire)</i> ... 1394	<i>The Duke of Devonshire</i> ... 1396
<i>Lord Tweedmouth</i> ... 1395	<i>The Marquess of Ripon</i> ... 1396
<i>The Duke of Devonshire</i> ... 1395	<i>The Lord Chancellor (the Earl of Halsbury)</i> ... 1396

Bill passed, and returned to the Commons.

QUESTIONS.

LONDON SCHOOL BOARD AND RE-HOUSING OF DISPLACED PERSONS.

DISCUSSION:—

<i>The Earl of Hardwicke</i> ... 1397	<i>Lord Reay</i> ... 1400
<i>Lord Belper</i> ... 1399	

House adjourned at five minutes before Five of the clock.

COMMONS: TUESDAY, 4TH JULY 1899.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON LAW, ETC.—Ordered, that the Standing Committee on Law, etc., have leave to sit this day until half-past Three of the clock during the sitting of the House.—(*Sir James Fergusson.*) ... 1402

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [Lords] (NO STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO APPLICABLE)—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders not previously inquired into, are applicable, viz., Fylde Water Board Bill [Lords]—Ordered, that the Bill be read a second time ... 1402

Barry Railway Bill; Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (New Railways) Bill and Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (Various Powers) Bill—Lords Amendments considered, and agreed to ... 1402

St. James's and Pall Mall Electric Light Bill (by Order)—Consideration of Lords Amendments deferred till Thursday ... 1402

Cobham Gas Bill [Lords] and Stretford Gas Bill [Lords]—Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments ... 1402

Yorke Estate Bill [Lords]—Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment ... 1402

Glasgow and South-Western Railway Bill [Lords]—Read a second time, and committed ... 1402

Warrington Corporation Bill—Ordered, that, in the case of the Warrington Corporation Bill, Standing Order 243 be suspended, and that the Bill be now read the third time.—(*Dr. Farquharson.*) Bill accordingly read the third time, and passed... 1403

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 14) Bill [Lords]; Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 15) Bill [Lords]; Gas and Water Orders Confirmation Bill [Lords] and Gas Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [Lords]—Read a second time, and committed ... 1403

Water Orders Confirmation Bill [Lords]—Read a second time and committed ... 1403

PETITIONS.

GROUND RENTS (TAXATION OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES) Petitions in favour—From Mossley and Lambeth; to lie upon the Table ... 1403

Local Government (Scotland) Act (1894) Amendment Bill—Petition from Glasgow, in favour; to lie upon the Table ... 1403

Mines (Eight Hours) Bill—Petition from Ffrwd, in favour; to lie upon the Table ... 1403

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PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE—Petition from London, for extension to women ;
to lie upon the Table ... 1403

POOR LAW AMENDMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1845—Petition from Meldrum, for
alteration of law ; to lie upon the Table ... 1403

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill—Petitions in favour—From
Padwell and Exeter : to lie upon the Table... 1403

Shops (Early Closing) Bill—Petition of the Leicestershire Trade Protection
Society, against ; to lie upon the Table ... 1403

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS ACT, 1897 (ASSOCIATIONS.)—Copy presented, of Returns
of (1) Associations constituted under the Voluntary Schools Act, 1897 ; (2)
Associated Schools and amounts of Aid Grant paid ; (3) Unassociated
Schools and amounts of Aid Grant paid [by Command] ; to lie upon the
Table ... 1404

COLONIAL FORTIFICATIONS ACT, 1877—Copy presented, of Representations,
dated 3rd July 1899, of the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the
Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury that it is expedient that
certain properties held in trust for the defence of the Colony of New South
Wales should be transferred to the Government of that colony, and Draft
of an Order in Council for giving effect to above Representations [by Act] ;
to lie upon the Table ... 1404

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS—Copy presented, of Returns of Accidents and Casualties
as reported to the Board of Trade by the several railway companies in the
United Kingdom during the three months ending 31st March 1899, etc.
[by Command] ; to lie upon the Table ... 1404

LIQUOR LICENSING LAWS (ROYAL COMMISSION)—Copy presented, of Final
Report of the Royal Commission on the Liquor Licensing Laws, with Index
[by Command] ; to lie upon the Table ... 1404

SAVINGS BANK AND FRIENDLY SOCIETIES—Accounts presented, showing the
interest accrued in respect of the securities standing in the names of the
Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt to the credit of the
Post Office Savings Banks Fund for the year ended 31st December, 1898,
and of the Fund for the Banks for Savings and the Fund for Friendly
Societies for the year ended 20th November, 1898 [by Act] ; to lie upon
the Table, and to be printed [No. 260.] ... 1404

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES)—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Con-
sular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 2,305 to 2,308 [by Command] ; to lie
upon the Table ... 1404

TRAMWAYS (STREET AND ROAD)—Return ordered, "of Street and Road
Tramways authorised by Parliament, showing the amount of capital
authorised, paid up, and expended ; the length of tramway authorised,
and the length open for the public conveyance of passengers, down to the
30th day of June, 1899 ; the gross receipts, working expenditure, and
net receipts ; the number of passengers conveyed, and the number of
miles run by cars during the year ended the 30th day of June, 1899 ;
together with the number of horses, engines, at that date (in continuation
of Parliamentary Paper, No. 355, of Session 1898.)"—(*Mr. Ritchie.*) ... 1405

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SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEE)—Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection : That they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure : Mr. Attorney-General and Mr. Butcher ; and had appointed in substitution : Mr. Solicitor-General and Sir Albert Rollit ... 1405

Mr. HALSEY further reported from the Committee : That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping and Manufactures : Mr. Solicitor-General ; and had appointed in substitution : Mr. Attorney-General... 1405

Reports to lie upon the Table.

Trawlers' Certificates Suspension Bill [Lords]—Read the first time ; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. (Bill 257.) ... 1405

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS—That they have agreed to, Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 16) Bill ; Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill ; Cork Corporation (Finance) Bill, without Amendment ; London Government Bill ; Scunthorpe Urban District Gas and Water Bill ; Great Central Railway Bill, with Amendments. Amendments to Dundee Gas, Street Improvements and Tramways Bill [Lords], without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill intituled, "An Act to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Gas and Waterworks Facilities Act, 1870, relating to Farnham Gas, Freshwater Gas, Morecambe Gas, and Newtown and Llanllwchaearn Gas. [Gas Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [Lords].

And also a Bill intituled, "An Act to amend the Isolation Hospitals Act, 1893." [Isolation Hospitals Amendment Bill [Lords] ... 1405

London Government Bill—Lords Amendments to be considered upon Thursday, and to be printed. (Bill 258.) ... 1406

Gas Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [Lords]—Read the first time ; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. (Bill 259.) ... 1406

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HASLAR HOSPITAL—Question, Captain Norton (Newington, W.) ; Answer, The First Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Goschen, St. George's, Hanover Square)... 1407

CARNOUSTIE LINKS—Question, Captain Sinclair (Forfarshire) ... 1408

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BRITISH OFFICERS IN THE SOUDAN—Question, Lord Charles Beresford (York) ; Answer, The Financial Secretary to the War Office (Mr. J. Powell Williams, Birmingham, S.) ... 1408

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PUBLIC BUSINESS.

Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Bill—As amended, considered.

New clause :—

"Formation of Parliamentary Panels: Appointment of Commissioners, in lieu of Clause 5, to be omitted subsequently :—

"(1) When it is determined that Commissioners shall be appointed for the purpose of inquiring as to the propriety of making and issuing a Provisional Order or Orders under this Act, the chairman shall, with due regard to the character and magnitude of the provisions in the proposed Order or Orders, appoint four Commissioners for that purpose, and shall at the same time nominate one of the Commissioners as chairman.

"(2) Standing Orders may, if the two Houses of Parliament think fit so to order, provide for the formation of panels of Members of the two Houses respectively to act as Commissioners under this Act (hereinafter referred to as the Parliamentary panels).

"(3) Subject to Standing Orders as aforesaid, two of the Commissioners shall be taken from the Parliamentary panel of Members of the House of Lords, and two shall be taken from the Parliamentary panel of Members of the House of Commons.

"(4) Subject to Standing Orders as aforesaid, if the chairman shall be unable to appoint Commissioners as in the immediately preceding sub-section mentioned, three, or if need be all, of the Commissioners may be Members of the same Parliamentary panel.

"(5) Subject to Standing Orders as aforesaid, if the chairman shall be unable to appoint Commissioners as in either of the two immediately preceding sub-sections mentioned, so many persons as are required to make up the number of Commissioners shall be taken by the Secretary for Scotland from the extra-Parliamentary panel hereinbefore mentioned.

"(6) Any casual vacancy among the Commissioners, or in the office of Chairman of Commissioners, caused by death or resignation, or inability to give attendance, such resignation or inability to attend being certified by a writing under the Commissioner's hand, shall be filled up by the Secretary for Scotland by appointing a member of the extra-Parliamentary panel, and in the case of a vacancy in the office of chairman, by nominating as chairman one of the remaining Commissioners.

"(9) Notwithstanding a dissolution of Parliament, any Member of either House of Parliament may continue to act as Commissioner in any inquiry for the purpose of which he has been appointed to act.

"(8) The persons appointed as Commissioners shall have no personal or local interest in the matter of the proposed Order or Orders, and shall, as a condition of such appointment, make a declaration to that effect, provided that Scottish Members of either House of Parliament shall not be disqualified from acting as Commissioners to deal with proposed Orders in which they have no personal or local interest."—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

Brought up, and read the first time. ...

Motion made, and Question proposed—

"That the clause be read a second time."—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman</i>	<i>Dr. Clark (Caithness)</i> ...	1432
<i>(Stirling Burghs)</i> ...	<i>Mr. Cripps (Gloucestershire,</i>	
<i>Sir Charles Cameron (Glas-</i>	<i>Stroud)</i> ...	1432
<i>gow, Bridgeton)</i> ...	<i>Mr. Crombie (Kincardineshire)</i> ...	1433
<i>Mr. Arthur Elliot (Durham)</i> 1430	<i>Mr. Colville (Lanark, N.E.)</i> ...	1433

Question put, and agreed to.

Amendment proposed to the proposed clause—

"In line 6, after the word 'Commissioners,' to insert the words, 'being alternately, or as nearly as may be alternately, a Member of the House of Lords and a Member of the House of Commons.'"—(*Sir Charles Cameron.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

DISCUSSION :—

<i>The Lord Advocate (Mr.</i>	<i>Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman</i> ...	1434
<i>A. G. Murray, Buteshire)</i> 1434		

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment proposed to the proposed clause—

"In line 29, to leave out the words 'Secretary for Scotland,' and insert the word 'Chairmen' (*Sir Charles Cameron*)—instead thereof,"

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Question proposed, "That the words 'Secretary for Scotland' stand part of the proposed clause."

Mr. A. G. Murray 1435

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause amended—

"In line 29, by leaving out the words 'the extra-Parliamentary panel,' and inserting the words 'any of the panels.'—(*The Lord Advocate*)—instead thereof."

Clause, as amended, added.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 20, to leave out Sub-section (3) of Clause 1."—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Question proposed, "That the words of the sub-section, to the word 'give,' in line 21, stand part of the Bill."

Mr. A. G. Murray 1436

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Other Amendments made.

Another Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, line 16, after the word 'Order,' to insert the words 'or relate to any matter which had already been refused by the Secretary for Scotland in any previous application for a Provisional Order under this Act.'"—(*Sir Charles Cameron.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. A. G. Murray 1437

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, line 29, to leave out Sub-section (5) of Clause 2."—(*Mr. Cripps.*)

Question proposed, "That Sub-section (5) of Clause 2, stand part of the Bill."

Mr. A. G. Murray 1438

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 3, line 26, to leave out the word 'shall,' and insert the word 'may.'"—(*Dr. Clark.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'shall,' stand part of the clause."

Amendment agreed to.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 4, line 17, after the word 'relate,' to insert the words, 'or they may hold such inquiry elsewhere as the Commissioners may, with the consent of the parties promoting and opposing the Order, fix.'"—(*Sir Charles Cameron.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. A. G. Murray 1439

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

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Other Amendments made.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 5, line 34, after the word 'held,' to insert the words '(c) or Amendments have been made on the Order since it was originally submitted.'"—(*Sir Charles Cameron.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. A. G. Murray 1439

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Other Amendments made.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 6, line 11, after the word 'prescribed,' to insert the words, '(2a) If the Secretary for Scotland shall refuse to issue any Order under either of the two preceding sections of this Act, the promoters may, within ten clear days after the date of such refusal, present a petition to either House of Parliament, praying that the Order so refused may be referred to the Joint Committee provided for in the next succeeding section in the same way as is provided with respect to a Confirmation Bill under the said section.'"—(*Sir Charles Cameron.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. A. G. Murray 1440

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 6, line 15, after the word 'and,' to insert the words, 'said Bill after introduction shall be deemed to have passed through all its stages up to and including Committee, and shall be ordered to be considered in either House as if reported from a Committee.

"(4) Either House may, when the Bill stands as an Order of the Day, refer the Bill back to the Commissioners for further inquiry and report, either generally or with special instructions, but shall not be entitled to refer the Bill to a Select Committee or a Joint Committee of the two Houses."—(*Mr. Thomas Shaw.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

DISCUSSION :—

Mr. Cripps 1445

Mr. Hedderwick (*Wick* 1447

Burghs) 1447

Mr. A. G. Murray 1449

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1450

Sir Mark Stewart (*Kirkcud-* 1453

bright) 1453

Mr. R. Wallace (*Perth*) 1453

Mr. Stuart Wortley (*Sheffield,* 1454

Hallam) 1454

Mr. Crombie 1454

Mr. John Wilson (*Falkirk Burghs*) 1455

Mr. J. P. Smith (*Lanark, Par-* 1455

tick) 1455

Dr. Clark (*Cairness*) 1456

Mr. A. G. Murray 1456

Mr. C. M. Douglas (*Lanark,* 1456

N.W.) 1456

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 114; Noes, 159. (Division List, No. 218.)

Amendment proposed—

"In page 6, line 23, after the word 'orders,' to insert the words, 'and if the petition has already been considered and reported on by a Commission of two Members of each House of Parliament, either House may refer the Bill to the Commissioners.'"—(*Dr. Clark.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. A. G. Murray 1159

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

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Amendment proposed—

“In page 6, line 26, to leave out the word ‘agent.’”—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Question proposed, “That the word ‘agent’ stand part of the Bill.”

Mr. A. G. Murray 1459

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Other Amendments made.

Amendment proposed—

“In page 6, line 36, to leave out Sub-section 3, of Clause 9.”—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Question proposed, “That the words ‘the Joint Committee’ stand part of the Bill.

DISCUSSION :—

Mr. A. G. Murray ... 1460 *Dr. Clark* 1461
Sir Charles Cameron ... 1460

Question put, and agreed to.

Other Amendments made.

Amendment proposed—

“After the words last inserted, to insert the words, ‘any notary public.’”—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Question proposed, “That those words be there inserted.”

Mr. A. G. Murray 1461

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment proposed—

“In page 9, line 34, after the word ‘and,’ to insert the words, ‘shall remain in force until the expiration of five years from the passing thereof, and to the end of the then next Session of Parliament. It.’”—(*Sir Charles Cameron.*)

Question proposed, “That those words be there inserted.”

DISCUSSION :—

Mr. A. G. Murray ... 1462 *Dr. Clark* 1462
Mr. Colville 1462

Question put, and negatived.

Motion made and Question proposed, “That the Bill be now read the third time.”—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

DISCUSSION :

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1463 *The First Lord of the Treas-*
Mr. Dalziel (Kirkcaldy *ury (Mr. A. J. Balfour,*
Bunghs) 1463 *Manchester, E.)*... .. 1463

Debate adjourned till Thursday.

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BOARD OF EDUCATION [SALARIES]—Considered in Committee.

Question again proposed—

"That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of a Salary, not exceeding £2,000, to the President of the Board of Education, and of salaries and remuneration to the secretaries, officers, and servants of the Board, in pursuance of any Act of the present Session to provide for the establishment of a Board of Education for England and Wales."
—(Sir J. Gorst.)

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Dr. Clark (Caithness)</i> ...	1464	<i>Mr. Yoxall</i> ...	1466
<i>Mr. Yoxall (Nottingham, W.)</i>	1465	<i>Mr. Bryce (Aberdeen, S.)</i> ...	1467
<i>The Vice-President of the</i>		<i>Sir J. Gorst</i> ...	1468
<i>Committee of Council</i>		<i>Mr. Bryce</i> ...	1468
<i>on Education (Sir J.</i>		<i>Mr. Yoxall</i> ...	1469
<i>Gorst, Cambridge Univer-</i>		<i>Mr. Caldwell (Lanark, Mid)</i> ...	1469
<i>sity)</i> ...	1466	<i>Dr. Clark</i> ...	1470

Question put, "That '£2,000' stand part of the motion."

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 127 ; Noes, 50. (Division List, No. 219.)

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of a Salary, not exceeding £2,000, to the President of the Board of Education, and of Salaries and Remuneration to the Secretaries, Officers, and Servants of the Board, in pursuance of any Act of the present Session to provide for the establishment of a Board of Education for England and Wales.

Resolution to be reported To-morrow.

Small Houses (Acquisition of Ownership) Bill—[THIRD READING]—Order for Third Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucester-</i>		<i>Mr. John Wilson (Durham, Mid)</i>	1474
<i>shire, Forest of Dean)</i> ...	1471	<i>The Secretary of State for the Col-</i>	
<i>Mr. Caldwell (Lanark, Mid)</i>	1474	<i>onies (Mr. J. Chamberlain, Bir-</i>	
		<i>mingham, W.)</i> ...	1475

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read the third time, and passed.

Electric Lighting (Clauses) Bill—Considered in Committee, and reported ; as amended, to be considered To-morrow ... 1479**Improvement of Land Bill**—[SECOND READING.]—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(The Solicitor-General.)

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Amendment proposed—

“To leave out the word ‘now,’ and at the end of the Question to add the words ‘upon this day three months.’”—(*Mr. Samuel Evans.*)

Question proposed, “That the word ‘now,’ stand part of the Question.”

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. A. C. Humphreys-Owen,</i> <i>Montgomery)</i>	1480	<i>Sir Walter Foster (Derbyshire,</i> <i>Ilkeston)</i>	1484
<i>The President of the Board of</i> <i>Agriculture (Mr. Long,</i> <i>Liverpool, West Derby)</i> ...	1480	<i>Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty)</i> ..	1486
<i>Mr. Lewis (Flint Boroughs)</i> 1482		<i>Dr. Clark</i>	1486
<i>Mr. Jeffreys (Hampshire,</i> <i>Basingstoke)</i>	1484	<i>Mr. Hemphill (Tyrone, N.)</i> ...	1486
		<i>Mr. Loyd (Berkshire, Abingdon)</i> .	1488
		<i>Mr. Hedderwick (Wick Burghs)</i> .	1488

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 140 ; Noes, 44. (Division List, No. 120.)

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Motion made, and Question put—

“That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Law, &c.”—(*Mr. Walter Long.*)

The House divided :—Ayes, 143 ; Noes, 44. (Division List, No. 221.)

Bill committed to the Standing Committee on Law, &c.

Palatine Court of Durham Bill [Lords]—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, “That the Bill be now read a second time.”

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. Samuel Evans (Glamor-</i> <i>gan, Mid)</i>	1493	<i>Mr. Hedderwick (Wick Burghs)</i> ..	1496
<i>The Solicitor-General (Sir</i> <i>R. B. Finlay, Inverness</i> <i>Burghs)</i>	1496	<i>Dr. Clark (Caithness)</i>	1497
		<i>Mr. Channing (Northampton, E.)</i> .	1498
		<i>Mr. Caldwell (Lanark, Mid)</i> ...	1498

Amendment proposed—

“To leave out the word ‘now,’ and at the end of the Question to add the words, ‘upon this day three months.’”—(*Mr. Channing.*)

Question proposed, “That the word ‘now’ stand part of the Question.”

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. Carvell Williams (Notts,</i> <i>Mansfield)</i>	1499	<i>Mr. Bryn Roberts (Carnarvonshire,</i> <i>Eifion)</i>	1500
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It being Midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Thursday.

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ROYAL NIGER COMPANY (CONSOLIDATED FUND)—Resolution reported—

"That it is expedient to authorise the issue, out of the Consolidated Fund, of sums not exceeding £865,000, and, for the purpose of providing money for such issue, the borrowing, by means of terminable annuities charged on and paid out of the moneys annually provided by Parliament for Foreign and Colonial Services; and, if those moneys are insufficient, out of the Consolidated Fund, of a sum not exceeding £820,000, for making payments to the Royal Niger Company, in consideration of the transfer to the Crown of the administrative powers of the said company, together with their treaty and other rights and property, and for meeting expenditure rendered necessary by such transfer."—(*The Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Resolution read a second time.

Amendment proposed—

"In line 6, to leave out '£820,000,' and insert '£620,000.'"—(*Mr. T. P. O'Connor.*)

Question proposed, "That '£820,000' stand part of the Resolution."

DISCUSSION :—

<i>The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir M. Hicks-Beach, Bristol, W.)</i> ...	1506	<i>Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.)</i> ...	1507
		<i>Mr. Dalziel (Kirkcaldy Burghs)</i> ...	1510
		<i>Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty)</i> ...	1511

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Resolutions agreed to.

Bill Ordered to be brought in by Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer and Mr. Brodrick.

Royal Niger Company Bill—"To make provision for certain payments to be made in connection with the revocation of the charter of the Royal Niger Company," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. (Bill 260.) ... 1512

Cottage Homes Bill—Special Report from the Select Committee brought up, and read.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 261.) ... 1512

The House adjourned at ten minutes before One of the clock.

COMMONS: WEDNESDAY, 5th JULY 1899.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Kensington and Notting Hill Electric Lighting Bill—Lords Amendments considered, and agreed to ... 1513

Birmingham, North Warwickshire, and Stratford-upon-Avon Railway Bill [Lords.]—Read a second time, and committed ... 1513

Great Eastern Railway (General Powers) Bill [Lords]—To be read a second time upon Monday next ... 1513

North Staffordshire Railway Bill [Lords]—Read a second time, and committed ... 1513

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Mersey Docks and Harbour Board (Finance) Bill [Lords] (Stamp Duties)—Considered in Committee:—

Resolved, that the Board may from time to time enter into agreements with the Commissioners of Inland Revenue, if the Commissioners in their discretion think proper, for the payment to the Commissioners, by way of composition of Stamp Duty on transfers of any stocks, of such a sum or sums as may from time to time be agreed between the Board and the Commissioners, and in consideration of such payment transfers of the stock in respect of which such composition has been paid shall be exempt from Stamp Duty.—(*Dr. Farquharson.*)—Resolution to be reported To-morrow 1513

Electric Lighting Provisional Order Bill (No. 9) [Lords]—Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Order confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table. Bill to be read the third time To-morrow 1513

Mersey Docks and Harbour Board (Pilotage) Bill [Lords]—Reported, with Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table 1514

Transvaal Mortgage Loan and Finance Company Bill [Lords]—Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table. Bill to be read the third time 1514

PETITION.

Board of Education Bill—Petition from Walsall, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1514

Companies Acts Amendment Bill—Petition from Walsall, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1514

Factories and Workshops Bill—Petition from Walsall, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1514

Money-Lending Bill—Petition from Walsall, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1514

Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Bill—Petition from Campbelltown, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1514

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill—Petitions in favour:—From Gorton, Bootle, Liverpool, Leigh, and Chertsey; to lie upon the Table 1514

Tithe Rent-Charge (Rates) Bill—Petition from Walsall, against; to lie upon the Table... .. 1514

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

SUPERANNUATIONS—Copy presented,—of Treasury Minute, dated 26th June, 1899, declaring that for the due and efficient discharge of the duties of the post of Second Assistant to the Chief Crown Solicitor, Ireland, professional or other peculiar qualifications not ordinarily to be acquired in the Public Service are requisite [by Act]; to lie upon the Table ... 1514

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TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION ACT, 1899—Copies presented,—of Minutes sanctioning the Subjects to be taught under Clause 8 of the Act for the following Counties, &c.:—County Borough of Limerick (Sixth Minute), dated 9th March, 1899; County Borough of Limerick (Seventh Minute), dated 8th April, 1899; County Borough of South Shields (Third Minute), dated 25th May, 1899; County of Salop (Fourth Minute), dated 7th June, 1899; County of Rutland (Fourth Minute), dated 16th June, 1899; County of Worcester (Fifth Minute), dated 15th March, 1899 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table ... 1515

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill—Copy ordered, of “Memorandum stating the nature of the Proposals contained in the Provisional Orders included in the Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill.”—(*Mr. Ritchie.*) Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 262) ... 1515

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 3) Bill—Copy ordered, of “Memorandum stating the nature of the Proposals contained in the Provisional Orders included in the Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 3) Bill.”—(*Mr. Ritchie.*) Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed (No. 263) ... 1515

Isolation Hospitals (Amendment) Bill [Lords]—Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Friday, and to be printed. [Bill 261] ... 1515

Agricultural and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Bill—[SECOND READING]—Order for the Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, “That the Bill be now read a second time.”—(*Mr. G. W. Balfour.*)

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucester, Forest of Dean)</i> ...	1516	<i>The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. G. W. Balfour, Leeds, Central)</i> ...	1539
<i>Mr. Drage (Derby)</i> ...	1519	<i>Mr. Michael Austin (Limerick, W.)</i> ...	1541
<i>Mr. John Redmond (Waterford)</i> ...	1522	<i>Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.)</i> ...	1544
<i>Mr. Wolff (Belfast, E.)</i> ...	1527	<i>Mr. G. W. Balfour</i> ...	1553
<i>Sir Thomas Esmonde (Kerry, W.)</i> ...	1528	<i>Mr. Davitt</i> ...	1558
<i>Colonel Sanderson (Armagh, N.)</i> ...	1530	<i>Mr. T. M. Healy (Louth, N.)</i> ...	1558
<i>Mr. Davitt (Mayo, S.)</i> ...	1531	<i>Mr. G. W. Balfour</i> ...	1558
<i>Mr. Archdale (Fermanagh, N.)</i> ...	1534	<i>Mr. T. M. Healy</i> ...	1567
<i>Mr. Arthur J. Moore</i> ...	1535	<i>Mr. William Moore (Antrim, N.)</i> ...	1570
<i>Mr. J. C. Flynn (Cork, N.)</i> ...	1537	<i>Mr. William Redmond (Clare, W.)</i> ...	1571
		<i>Mr. Hemphill (Tyrone, W.)</i> ...	1571

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, “That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, &c.”—(*Mr. G. W. Balfour.*)

DISCUSSION :—

<i>Mr. Dillon</i> ...	1572	<i>Mr. G. W. Balfour</i> ...	1572
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Question put, and agreed to.

July 5.]

Page

BOARD OF EDUCATION (SALARIES)—Resolution reported—

“That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of a Salary, not exceeding £2,000, to the President of the Board of Education, and of salaries and remuneration to the secretaries, officers, and servants of the Board, in pursuance of any Act of the present session to provide for the establishment of a Board of Education for England and Wales.”

Resolution agreed to 1573

Sea Fisheries Regulation (Scotland) Act (1895) Amendment Bill—
Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question Proposed, “That the Bill be now read a second time.”

DISCUSSION :—

Mr. Banbury (Camberwell, *Mr. Crombie* (Kincardineshire) ... 1573
Peckham) 1573

Mr. BANBURY moved, “That the Debate be now adjourned;” but *Mr. SPEAKER*, being of opinion that the motion was an abuse of the Rules of the House, declined to propose the Question thereupon to the House.

Mr. Galloway (Manchester, S.W.) 1574

Question put, “That the Bill be now read a second time.”

The House divided :—Ayes 125 ; Noes 170. (Division List, No. 222.)

Stolen Goods Bill—[SECOND READING]—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, “That the Bill be now read a second time.”—(*Sir Howard Vincent.*)

DISCUSSION :—

Mr. T. M. Healy (Louth, *Sir Howard Vincent* (Sheffield, *N.*) 1575 *Central*) 1576

It being after half-past Five of the clock, the Order was deferred till Wednesday next.

Adjourned at twenty minutes before Six of the clock.

THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(AUTHORISED EDITION)

IN THE

FIFTH SESSION OF THE TWENTY-SIXTH PARLIAMENT OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND, APPOINTED
TO MEET THE 7TH FEBRUARY 1899, IN THE 62ND YEAR OF THE REIGN OF
HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.

EIGHTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1899.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 20th June 1899.

ROYAL ASSENT.

COMMISSION.

The following Bills received the Royal Assent :—

Finance.

Infectious Disease (Notification) Act (1889) Extension.

Parish Councillors (Tenure of Office).

Broughty Ferry Gas and Paving Order.

Education Department Provisional Orders Confirmation (Aberavon, &c.)

Pilotage Provisional Order.

Farnley Tyas Marriages.

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 1).

Ilford Gas.

Birkenhead Corporation.

VOL. LXXIII. [FOURTH SERIES.]

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 2).

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 4).

Metropolitan Common Scheme (Harrow Weald) Provisional Order.

Brigg Urban District Gas.

Norfolk Estuary.

Cambridge University and Town Gas.

St. Albans Gas.

Hull, Barnsley, and West Riding Junction Railway and Dock.

Arbroath Corporation Gas.

Kew Bridge.

West Highland Railway.

Crowborough District Water.

Dumbarton Burgh.

North Pembrokeshire and Fishguard Railway.

Infant Orphan Asylum.

London Hospital.

Stockton and Middlesbrough Water.

A

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with—

BLACKPOOL IMPROVEMENT.

DARWEN CORPORATION.

DUBLIN CORPORATION.

And also the Certificate that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with—

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 8).

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

HASTINGS HARBOUR BILL. [Lords.]
BELFAST AND NORTHERN COUNTIES RAILWAY BILL.

GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY BILL.

Committee to meet on Thursday next.

CHARING CROSS, EUSTON, AND HAMPSTEAD RAILWAY BILL.

The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The orders made on the 9th of May last and the 12th instant discharged; and Bill committed.

SOUTH - EASTERN AND LONDON, CHATHAM, AND DOVER RAILWAY COMPANIES BILL.

Report from the Select Committee, that the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on the 1st and 8th instant discharged; and Bill committed for Thursday next.

ST. JAMES'S AND PALL MALL ELECTRIC LIGHT BILL.

Reported with an Amendment.

WOLVERHAMPTON CORPORATION BILL. [Lords.]

Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

BELFAST WATER BILL.

The Queen's consent signified; and Bill reported with Amendments.

WESTON-SUPER-MARE GRAND PIER BILL. [Lords.]

Reported with Amendments.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 3) BILL.

The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn. The orders made on the 6th and 12th instant discharged; and Bill committed to a Committee of the Whole House.

GLASGOW AND SOUTH-WESTERN RAILWAY BILL. [Lords.]

Read 3^a; Amendments made, Bill passed, and sent to the Commons.

WOLVERHAMPTON TRAMWAYS BILL. [Lords.]

OWEN'S COLLEGE, MANCHESTER, BILL. [Lords.]

Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 18) BILL.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 19) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 3) BILL.

Brought from the Commons.

BEXHILL AND ROTHERFIELD RAILWAY BILL.

BRADFORD TRAMWAYS AND IMPROVEMENT BILL.

DERBY CORPORATION TRAMWAYS, &c., BILL.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (MONEY) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1^a; and referred to the Examiners.

LONDON, BRIGHTON, AND SOUTH COAST RAILWAY (PENSIONS) BILL.

LISBURN URBAN DISTRICT COUNCILS BILL.

Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to.

FRIENDS' PROVIDENT INSTITUTION BILL. [Lords.]

Returned from the Commons agreed to, with an Amendment: The said Amendment considered, and agreed to.

MID-KENT GAS BILL. [Lords.]

Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments.

SKIPTON URBAN DISTRICT GAS BILL. [Lords.]

Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments; the said Amendments considered, and agreed to.

EAST LONDON WATER BILL.

The Order made on Friday last, appointing certain Lords the Select Committee to consider the Bill, discharged.

Report from the Committee of Selection that the five Lords appointed a Select Committee on the Central Electric Supply Bill and other Bills do form the Select Committee for the consideration of the East London Water Bill; read, and agreed to; All Petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bill to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bill.

CENTRAL ELECTRIC SUPPLY BILL.**CENTRAL LONDON RAILWAY BILL.****EAST LONDON WATER BILL.****MIDLAND RAILWAY BILL.****GAS LIGHT AND COKE COMPANY BILL.****LONDON, BRIGHTON, AND SOUTH-COAST RAILWAY (VARIOUS POWERS) BILL.**

Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Boston be proposed to the House as a Member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Duke of Marlborough; read, and agreed to.

TRAMWAYS ORDERS CONFIRMATION (No. 2) BILL. [Lords.]**TRAMWAYS ORDERS CONFIRMATION (No. 3) BILL. [Lords.]****WEST MIDDLESEX WATER BILL.****AIRE AND CALDER NAVIGATION BILL.****MILTON CREEK CONSERVANCY BILL.****GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY BILL.****GREAT WESTERN AND GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY COMPANIES BILL.**

Report from the Committee of Selection that the Duke of Marlborough be

proposed to the House as a Member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Boston; read, and agreed to.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 5) BILL.**ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 6) BILL.**

Read 2^a (according to Order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 13) BILL. [Lords.]

Amendments reported (according to Order), and Bill to be read 3^a on Thursday next.

TRAMWAYS ORDERS CONFIRMATION (No. 1) BILL. [Lords.]

Read 3^a (according to Order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 18) BILL. (No. 128.)**ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 19) BILL. (No. 129.)****LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL. (No. 130.)****LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 3) BILL. (No. 131.)**

Read 1^a; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners.

PRIVATE AND PROVISIONAL CONFIRMATION BILLS.

Ordered that Standing Orders Nos. 72 and 82 be suspended for the remainder of the Session.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES PROVISIONAL ORDER (BORROWSTOUNNESS) BILL.

To be read 2^a on Thursday next: (*The Lord Balfour.*)

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 8) BILL.

To be read 2^a on Thursday next.—(*The Earl of Dudley.*)

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

AFRICA, No. 5 (1899).

Report on the Uganda Railways by Sir Guildford Molesworth, K.C.I.E., dated 28th March, 1899; with six maps: Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

SUPERANNUATION.

Treasury Minute, dated 8th June, 1899, granting a retired allowance to Alfred Edgar Clay, clerk of the second division in the Money Order Office of the General Post Office, under Section 2 of the Superannuation Act, 1887.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL.

Returns relating to the Council up to the 31st March, 1899, with estimate of expenditure for the year ending 31st March, 1900.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

SEATS FOR SHOP ASSISTANTS (ENGLAND AND IRELAND) BILL.

To be read 2^a on Friday, the 30th instant.—(*The Duke of Westminster.*)

REFORMATORY SCHOOLS AMENDMENT BILL. [Lords.]

Reported from the Standing Committee without amendment, and to be read 3^a on Thursday next.

LONDON GOVERNMENT BILL.

(SECOND READING.)

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (The Duke of Devonshire): My Lords, in moving the Second Reading of this Bill it will not be necessary for me to enter at any length into the history of previous legislative attempts to deal with the great question of the government of London. Prior to 1855 it may be said that no attempt to deal with that question by public legislation had been made at all. Such provision as existed for the government of London was the result of a series of local Acts passed very much at haphazard, and certainly without much

reference to each other. They had no settled plan, and rested upon no defined principles. It is true that a central authority did exist, charged with the administration of certain matters common to the whole metropolis. That body existed under the name of the Commissioners of Sewers, but, outside the administration by that body of such matters as had been entrusted to them by one of these Acts, the administration of all those other matters which in our large towns are managed and controlled by great and powerful organisations created under the Municipal Corporations Act was left in London to the vestries, in exactly the same way as the affairs of any country parish. In 1855 that extremely primitive administration was to a certain extent reorganised. Administrative vestries were created, bodies directly representing the ratepayers of certain parishes. District boards were also established, which were indirectly elected by the vestries of the smaller London parishes. The central authority was reconstructed and reorganised by the substitution of the Metropolitan Board of Works for the Commissioners of Sewers, with larger and more extended powers. That body, also, was indirectly elected by the parish vestries and district councils. It is now, I think, admitted that the Metropolitan Board of Works did much work of a very useful and valuable character—more, perhaps, than was admitted at the time. But the records of that Board were certainly not in all respects satisfactory, and the mode of its election was so entirely dissimilar in principle to that which had been adopted for the governing authorities of all our other great cities that it is not to be wondered at that the opportunity was taken, which was offered when the Local Government Bill was under consideration, to give London, by the creation of a County Council, a central authority more resembling in its nature, constitution, and mode of election that which had been the principle accepted for the other great urban communities. But it was never intended that the creation of the London County Council would do all for the metropolis that is done by the municipal corporations which exist in the other great cities. The Local Government Act of 1888 definitely created, and finally settled, a central authority for London which, as far as I know, no one at present wishes

to interfere with or disturb. But that Act did not profess to be a complete Act for the government of London. It avowedly left unsettled the question of the minor authorities, which it was always understood was reserved for future consideration. Up to now no attempt has been made to deal with these ancillary and auxiliary municipal authorities, the necessity of which has always been admitted, and is more than ever admitted at the present time. In approaching the question of smaller authorities and administrative areas for London it was necessary to consider what materials were at the disposal of the Government for the purpose of framing their policy in regard to them. We had the Report of the Commission appointed by the late Government in 1893, and which, under Mr. Courtney, reported in 1894, and I believe that, in the opinion of some noble Lords opposite, our policy in regard to the government of London ought to have been founded on the main recommendations of that Report. I do not think it would be worth while for me to spend much time in the discussion of those proposals, or in discussing whether the late Government were well advised in framing the terms of the reference to that Commission, and whether those terms, for the object they had in view, were wise or not. But the terms of the reference in the case of that Commission made it impossible for the present Government to accept that Report as a basis for its legislation. The terms were:

"To consider and report upon the conditions under which the amalgamation of the City and County of London could be effected, and make specific and practical proposals for that object."

That reference assumed that the Corporation of the City was to cease to exist as an independent body, and was to be merged in the County Council. It was not open to the Commission to report whether such a policy was expedient or not. That question was decided for them, and all they had to do was to report as to how this amalgamation and unification could be carried out. However possible such a policy might have been for our predecessors, or may be for our successors, it was a policy impossible for the present Government to accept as a basis for their proposals. The Conservative Party, which forms the great majority of the supporters of the present Govern-

ment, are almost unanimously pledged against any attack upon the privileges and constitution of the City of London, however veiled or qualified that attack may be. There are others, no doubt, who support the present Government, who, like myself, are less committed by any previous declarations on this subject. But, in my opinion, there are few indeed who are of opinion that there are practical reasons, or any reasons at all beyond purely speculative and theoretical reasons, why Parliament should, at the present time, be invited to undertake a task of such magnitude, and which would involve such opposition, as any proposal to merge the Corporation of the City of London in the County Council. I do not believe that it is in political circles only that such an attack would be resisted and resented. I believe that the City of London—the unreformed Corporation of the City of London, as you may call it if you please—is regarded by many, if not all, of our great reformed corporations as still one of our greatest municipal institutions; and many of them, proud as they are of, respecting as they do, the history and traditions of that Corporation, would feel that any attack upon it would be an indirect menace to their privileges. But however that may be, and although it would have been a pure waste of time for us to have founded our proposals upon the main recommendations of Mr. Courtney's Commission, there is nothing in this Bill, as was pointed out by Mr. Courtney himself, to prevent a future reformer from undertaking the reform of the Corporation of the City of London if he has the courage and the disposition to undertake the task. If, as I believe some anticipate, the new municipalities to be formed under this Bill are likely to regard with suspicion and jealousy the superior privileges which will be possessed by the City of London, then, indeed, it is possible that the way may be clear for further legislation which will deprive the City of those special privileges, and which will reduce the City precisely to the same level as the new corporations. But if, on the other hand, as I venture to think is more likely, these new corporations recognise in the City of London not only the most ancient and the most wealthy, but, at the same time, one of the best administered and most respected municipal institutions of the country, then, in my opinion, the position of the City of

London will be materially strengthened, and strengthened in the most legitimate and most useful manner. But, while it was impossible for the present Government to base their policy on the main recommendations of the Report of Mr. Courtney's Commission, there were incidental recommendations in that Report which indicated the direction in which reform might be looked for. For instance, in discussing the question of the partition of powers between the central body and the local bodies, the Commission make use of these words :

" We venture to repeat that we think it important for the sake of the dignity and the usefulness of local bodies, whose status should be enhanced as much as possible, as well as for the sake of the central body, where a continuance of work may be expected, that no duties should be thrown upon the central body that can be equally well performed by the local authorities."

The principle thus indicated in the Report of Mr. Courtney's Commission was confirmed and emphasised by the action of important bodies of London citizens themselves. We received representations from large and influential bodies in various districts of London. Those bodies said they had no desire to attack either the City of London or the County Council. They admitted that there were many important functions which must continue to be discharged by the County Council. They expressed no doubt as to the public spirit with which it had devoted itself to its labours or as to much of the work which it had done. Some of them may have suggested that the zeal of the County Council might perhaps sometimes have been tempered with discretion, and also that, having as much to do as was well within its power, it was desirable it should refrain from the work it seemed sometimes to entertain to extend even that great mass of work it had already to do. But they said that neither the City, which was remote from them, nor the County Council, which was already overworked, could do for them all that the municipal authorities in our other great towns do for their citizens. They said that their vestries and district boards did not possess either the powers or the dignity which other great towns—towns great but not greater than some of the parishes of London—possessed, and which experience proved attracted to them the services of the best and the

Duke of Devonshire.

ablest of their citizens. They said "Leave the City and County Council alone, and give to us the privilege possessed by the citizens of every other city of petitioning Her Majesty in Council to grant us municipal incorporation under the Municipal Corporations Act." Petitions to that effect were presented from Westminster, Paddington, Marylebone, Islington, and other parishes and districts of London. Those petitions came before the Privy Council, and at first sight it appeared that a solution of the question was thus indicated, and that these municipal institutions might be created without recourse to the assistance of Parliamentary legislation. But our legal advisers were of opinion—and I have not the least doubt were rightly of opinion—that as Parliament had already provided by legislation for the government of London, although in a confessedly imperfect manner, it would not be competent for the Queen in Council to grant municipal incorporation under the Municipal Corporations Act, which would confer upon the newly created bodies powers inconsistent with the spirit of, and in some respects directly contravening, the principles already laid down by law passed by Parliament. It was also suggested that a short Act might be passed, which should provide that, notwithstanding anything contained in the Metropolis Management Acts, it should be competent for the Queen in Council to confer on petitioning inhabitants municipal incorporation as in other places; but that procedure did not appear, on examination, so simple and so satisfactory as it might seem to be at first. The franchise of the London vestries is wider than that of municipal corporations, and by such a procedure many of the London voters now possessing some, though imperfect, municipal rights would have been disfranchised altogether. But what was still more important was that the new municipalities thus created would have stood in a different position to the County Council from that in which any other corporation stands to any other authority; and it was necessary that provision should be made for reconciling the respective rights, powers, and position of the two authorities. The conclusion was forced upon us that the end in view could not be attained by either of those administrative or legislative short cuts, and

that Parliament must be invited seriously to consider the problem how the principle of the Municipal Corporations Act could be applied to the peculiar circumstances of the metropolis, possessing as it already did a central authority for certain purposes common to the whole of London, which it was not proposed to disturb; and also be consulted as to how the desire, which was admitted to be a reasonable desire, that the citizens of London should possess privileges similar and not inferior to those possessed by other urban communities, might be conceded. It will be sufficient, I think, if I enumerate very shortly the principal detailed provisions of this Bill. Its principle is, as I have said, to adapt the provisions of the Municipal Corporations Act to the different parts of a great community, the magnitude of which has rendered necessary the constitution of a special central authority. If that principle is accepted, its application is necessarily a matter mainly of detail, which probably can best be considered in Committee. The Bill proposes to divide the whole of London into areas, each of which shall become a municipal borough. There is an advantage in this procedure over that which would have been attained by simply following the practice of the Municipal Corporations Act, inasmuch that under that Act these Corporations would have been formed separately, successively and piecemeal, and that in the process of formation there would have existed a variety of administration in different parts of London. There would also have been great difficulty in assigning proper boundaries to each of the new municipalities when it was not known whether the adjoining areas would remain under vestries or would also petition for incorporation. As a result of discussions in Committee in the House of Commons, the principle of the division of London into boroughs has been extended beyond what was originally proposed. The Bill, as introduced, scheduled only seven areas in London which were at once to receive municipal incorporation. The remaining areas were to be mapped out by Commissioners, appointed by and responsible to a Committee of the Privy Council. But as the schedules now stand the whole of London is divided primarily into certain areas, each of which will receive municipal incorporation. At the same time, accord-

ing to the usual practice, their exact boundaries are left to be determined by the Commissioners, whose duty it will also be to submit a scheme adjusting the rights, financial and otherwise, as between these municipalities and other existing authorities. This is no new power which is proposed by this Bill to be conferred upon a Government Department; it is a practice which has always been followed, and which, I think, has worked satisfactorily, in the grant of municipal incorporation to any new area. The existing franchise of the vestries, which is wider than the municipal franchise, will be retained. The municipalities will consist in all cases of a mayor, aldermen, and council, the number of aldermen being limited to one-sixth of the number of the elected councillors, instead of one-third as in the case of ordinary municipal boroughs. The House of Commons decided, after a good deal of hesitation and some contradictory decisions, that in the London municipalities, contrary to the practice elsewhere, women should be eligible for the office of councillor and alderman. This point, no doubt, will be raised again before your Lordships in Committee. The number of the members of the council is to be much smaller than that of the existing vestries, and is not to exceed 70 in any case. It is proposed that they should retire annually by thirds, as in the case of municipal boroughs, but a provision has been inserted that on a resolution of the council the Local Government Board may make an order for a triennial election of the whole. The councils will take over the whole of the powers of the existing vestries and district boards under the Metropolis Management Acts, together with the powers exercised by various boards and commissioners under the adoptive Acts dealing with burial boards, baths and washhouses, and public libraries. Certain minor powers are transferred from the London County Council to the borough councils as the result of an agreement arrived at at a conference between the representatives of both bodies, and certain other powers will be made exercisable concurrently by the borough councils; and as to any future transfer of powers, if the County Council and a majority of the new borough councils agree on the transfer of other powers from or to the borough councils, the transfer shall be made by

Provisional Order ; but it must be made from or to all the councils, so as to secure uniformity. Here, again, an Amendment was, after discussion, introduced in Committee in the other House. Apprehensions were felt that it was possible that a political majority on the London County Council might assent to the transfer of powers which were essential to the usefulness and dignity of the County Council, and an Amendment requiring that such transfer should take place not only with the assent of the County Council, but also of the majority of the newly formed councils, was considered sufficient check to prevent any risk of this description ; and similar provisions which render possible the retransfer of any powers to the County Council which may be thought necessary have been introduced into the Bill. Provision is also made for adjusting the expenses incidental to the transfer of powers. As to finance, the Bill provides for the consolidation into a single rate of the several rates for sewers, lighting, and general rates. The consolidated rate thus formed will be called the general rate, and will be levied by the borough council, the duties of the overseers in this respect being taken over by them. The duties of the overseers with respect to the registration of electors and the formation of jury lists will be performed by the town clerks of the new municipal boroughs. All precepts for rates, subject to certain specified exceptions, are to go to the borough council and be executed by them, and the rates are to be levied by one demand note, which is to contain such information as will tell the ratepayers the purposes for which the money is required. This, it is hoped, will lead to great simplification and a better understanding of the financial administration of London. The receipts and expenses of the borough councils will be audited by district auditors appointed by the Local Government Board, in the same way as the accounts of the county councils and district councils throughout the country. I believe I have now enumerated the principal proposals of the Bill. I am very glad to believe that the measure is not likely to be met here, as it was in the other House, by a motion for its rejection. I hope that we may see in this a sign that the conciliatory spirit in which the Bill was conducted through the other House is recognised and appreciated. The hon.

Duke of Devonshire.

Member who moved the rejection of the Bill in the other House anticipated that the discussion would be closed, that all Amendments would be refused, and the Bill forced down the throats of the Opposition. Those anticipations have not been realised, and the Bill passed through the other House in a manner, I venture to think, far more satisfactory than was anticipated at the time of its introduction. A leading Member of the opposite party admitted that, if the House of Commons were given full opportunity to mould this Bill in Committee, it might be transformed into an *ehrenzettel* of conciliation, and even into a charter of local liberties. I shall not endeavour to show that the Bill accomplishes all that, but I believe that it will be accepted by the great majority of the inhabitants of London as a step, and a very long step, in the direction of reforming and giving completeness and even permanence to their local institutions and placing them upon a level not inferior to that on which municipal institutions in the other great cities and towns in this kingdom already stand. I have the honour, my Lords, to move the Second Reading of the Bill.

Moved, That the Bill be now read 2^a.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH : My Lords, my noble friend Lord Rosebery, in one of those recent excursions of his into the region of speculative politics with which he interests us, suggested as an interesting experiment that Liberal politicians should address Conservative meetings, and Conservative politicians Liberal meetings. Well, my Lords, that is the feeling I always experience when I attempt to address your Lordships upon a matter which involves any Party question ; and, in spite of the courteous tolerance which your Lordships always extend to me, I cannot help feeling a certain diffidence and discomfort, which I cannot surmount, in consequence of the fact that my views do not receive very ready acceptance at your hands, and that my arguments, however good they may seem to me, are not likely to secure much change in your Lordships' minds. But, my Lords, on the present occasion I feel that I have another drawback. I have the honour to be a member of the London County Council, and, more than that, a member of the Progressive party in that body. I know, my Lords, that those who occupy

that position on the County Council are supposed to hold very heterodox views as to what ought to be done in London ; but I would appeal to your Lordships to divest your minds of prejudice against me on any of these grounds. Although it is quite possible that if I were not a member of the London County Council I should not address the House on this subject, yet I do not stand before you as the spokesman of the County Council or as one who regards its actions as infallible. So far as I can I will keep the name of the County Council out of my speech ; and, with regard to the other point, I do not think this is in any sense a Party measure, for I cannot conceive how Party feeling can be whipped up or exacerbated on the mere details of a local government Bill. I think that this is only a Party measure in the sense that it is brought forward on the responsibility of the Government, and that therefore there falls on the Opposition a certain duty, not necessarily the duty of opposing it—especially when the Members of the Opposition are so unequal in numbers as compared with the supporters of the Government—but the duty of endeavouring to make it as good a measure as possible, and of improving it in its administrative details without attempting to attack the principle upon which it is founded. It seems to me that when we consider the subject of the improvement of the government of London the first idea we ought to have in our minds is the unity of London. I know that it is often said that London is a sort of inconglomerate body, and that citizenship is absent. I do not believe that to be the case at all. I think, moreover, that it is the duty of the Government as far as possible to encourage the feeling of citizenship. No one part of London can exist without the other parts, and I believe the only way to meet the grave problems, and even dangers, which beset the agglomeration of so vast a population in a small area is to deal with London as a whole, and to secure that the various districts of London should bear each its fair share of the common burdens. I should like to attempt to hold out to the noble Duke the Lord President of the Council some ground of agreement between us, and I think that from his speech we may very fairly assume that we may proceed on a common basis. I think that, taking his history of the

development of this measure, and his history of London government, I may ask him to agree with me that the present state of local government in London is complex and inefficient, and should be at once simplified, purified, and dignified ; and that the very necessity of the case in London demands that there should be a strong central body to deal with the subjects pertaining to London as a whole, and to secure as far as is necessary and desirable uniformity of action amongst the various local authorities throughout the metropolis. If these premisses may be admitted, I will try to show that in some points, at any rate, the proposals of the Government do not altogether fulfil them. The noble Duke began by telling us very frankly the reason why it was not intended to deal with the position of the City of London in this Bill. He said it was because, at any rate, one wing of the party to which he belonged was pledged to support the City of London against any attack. But I do not see why, because it is proposed to deal with the Corporation of the City of London and make it more useful, it should be assumed that there is any intention of making an attack upon the City. On the other hand, it seems to me that to deal with the City in a fair manner would be to dignify it, and to enable the Corporation to really fulfil its great duties. I think it is a deplorable thing that again the opportunity has been missed of dealing with the City of London. This is the second time that Her Majesty's present Ministers have missed that opportunity. They missed it in 1888, in the Local Government Act of that year. It may be said, however, that as that Bill had reference to the whole of the country it would have been overcrowding it to deal on that occasion with the question of the City of London, but I do not think that reason can be given now. Never was a Government in a better position to deal with the City than the present Government. Their views meet with the approbation of the public authorities in the City ; they are a very powerful Government, in spite of the wear and tear of four years ; they still have a majority of 140 in the other House, and in this House they are supreme. It does seem to me that under these circumstances we might have expected them to have tackled the question of the City of London. All authority is in favour of

such action. There was the Commission of 1835, and also the Commission of 1854. It is quite true that the latter Commission first suggested the plan of dividing London up into municipalities. They suggested seven municipalities, but at the same time that Commission also strongly recommended considerable reform in the Corporation of the City of London. Then there was the Commission to which the noble Duke himself has referred—the Commission which reported in 1894. These authorities all agreed that some action in connection with the City of London was imperative, and recommended that action should be taken. I do not think it can be contended, my Lords, that the administration of the City of London is so good or so simple as the noble Duke seemed to wish to indicate. What are the facts? The Common Council and Aldermen number, I think, 232, though dealing with a comparatively small area. Besides that, you have the fact that for the purposes of the Poor Law the City is divided, though it only consists of 671 acres, into 112 parishes, each of which has its own officers and its own expenses. That cannot be said to be a simple or efficient means of administration. Nor can it be said that the Corporation of the City of London attracts to itself the best of City men. I do not find amongst the lists of its Lord Mayors and Aldermen names such as those of Glyn, Lubbock, Rothschild, and Baring. On the contrary, I find that although the men who have held these offices have been no doubt excellent in themselves they are not in the first rank of City life. The ordinary Common Councillors, too, are generally retired retail tradesmen, and not men of distinction and calibre, which would fit them to deal with the administration of the affairs of so important a City. I think it is a deplorable thing that the City has not been dealt with in this Bill. I do not, however, intend to suggest to your Lordships that you should now include the City in the present Bill. I accept the Bill as it is, in the full expectation, as the noble Duke the Lord President of the Council foreshadowed in his speech, that at some future time we on this side of the House will be able to deal with the City in a manner much more thorough than it would be dealt with by the present Government. Let me now pass to the new bodies which the Bill will set up. I

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desire to at once say that I think there is every probability—in fact there is a certainty—that the administration of local government in London will be in far better hands when these new bodies are created than at present. The reduction in the number of local authorities will be an enormous improvement. I think that something like 200 local authorities, comprising vestries, district boards, and so forth, will disappear, and their place will be taken by 27 borough councils. I hope that before the Bill becomes law that number may be even still further increased. I think that if the number were increased to 29 or 30 it would be a great improvement. Even supposing 30 new borough councils were set up with the full number of 70 members on each, there would at the most be but 2,000 borough councillors in place of the present 3,110 members of vestries and district boards. In my opinion, this reduction in the number of members will tend greatly to increase the quality of the men who serve on the boards, and therefore the efficiency of the work. I come now to the constitution of the boards themselves. It is proposed to call their chairmen mayors. I hope that will ensure excellent chairmen; but, for myself, I have not that great faith in the title of mayor which some of your Lordships hold. I do not, however, suppose it can do much harm. But in the provision for aldermen the Government have gone back on recent provisions, and on the principle both of the Scotch County Councils Act and the Irish Local Government Act, in which aldermen were not included. I do not think you will find that the appointment of aldermen will in any way strengthen these councils. I should like to ask on this point for some definite expression of opinion as to what the qualification of an alderman under this Bill is to be. I have myself attempted to arrive at an opinion upon that subject, but have failed, and I should like some noble Lord, on behalf of the Government, to give the House some information before this Debate closes as to what the qualification is to be. With regard to the powers which it is proposed that these councils should exercise, I find that it is intended to give them very large powers as to the delegation of their duties to committees. It is proposed that every committee shall report their proceedings to the council, but that,

to the extent to which the council so direct, the acts and proceedings of the committee shall not acquire the approval of the council. Surely that is a very wide power. Would it not be wiser to say that the decision of every committee should be reported to the council, and that the proposals of the committee should receive the sanction of the council? I regard that delegation of powers to a committee sitting in private as a very dangerous one, and one which should be avoided. It is not even laid down in the Bill that each of these councils should have a finance committee to whom all matters of finance should be referred. It is proposed in this Bill that the new borough councils shall have the power of promoting Bills in Parliament and other powers of a very wide character. You propose to give them powers larger than those given to the County Council of London, and larger than those which have been given to the county councils throughout England. The local county councils have no power whatever to promote Bills, but they have the power reserved to them, of course, of appearing in opposition to Bills. Under this Act it is proposed to give the new borough councils the same powers in regard to the promotion of Bills in Parliament as is given to the great municipalities throughout the kingdom. The County Council have only the powers, in regard to the promotion of Bills, which were transferred to them from the Metropolitan Board of Works. Those powers are confined to the promotion of Bills which are for the purpose of executing certain works within the county of London, but the new bodies under this Bill will have power to promote Bills for any object they may desire, whether within their district or not. That seems to me to be a very large power indeed. The London County Council has perhaps come under just criticism as being a body which has been too fond of promoting Bills in Parliament, and of spending the ratepayers' money in that direction; but in this Bill you are going to give to 27 or 30 bodies, throughout London, powers to promote Bills in Parliament of a much wider character. I think there is great danger in this, and I hope your Lordships will be willing to consider a proposal in the direction of restriction. Although the new bodies are to be called municipalities, they will not have the powers

possessed by the great municipalities throughout the kingdom. Many of the powers which the great municipalities throughout the kingdom exercise cannot be given to these borough councils, because they must be restricted in their operations by the action of whatever central body governs the whole of London. The control of such matters as the fire brigade, the water supply, main drainage, technical education, asylums, and so forth, cannot be given to these bodies, and it seems to me that to call them municipalities when you cannot give them the powers of municipalities is a mistake, and will not really strengthen their position. You may call a thistle a rose if you like, but you will not make it more attractive or make it fulfil the same purpose as the rose by so doing. The mere name will not make the bodies attractive to the people of London, or induce the best men to become members of them. The thing that will make the local bodies attractive will be the work given to them to do, and if you give them large powers and important work you will then attract the best men to them. I desire to touch for one moment upon the proposal in the Bill to create a City of Greater Westminster, which seems to me a very dangerous experiment. The proposed City of Westminster will be greater in rateable value than the City of London. The rateable value of the parishes to be included in the new City of Westminster is, roughly speaking, £5,000,000, whereas the rateable value of the City of London is only four and a-half millions. I find that by far the biggest of the remaining areas to be created under this Bill is the borough of Kensington, which has a rateable value of £2,199,000. I should have thought that between these various areas there should be something like uniformity, but in my judgment the principle of uniformity is not being adhered to when we here find a proposal to create an area which is more than double the rateable value of any other area proposed to be included in the scheme. Besides, at least three-fifths of the districts that are to be included in the new City of Westminster do not desire to be included in this area. The noble Duke did not refer to this proposal, nor attempt to bring forward the argument that the City of Westminster was an ancient city with an ancient history. He did not.

attempt to prove anything of the sort. I attach no importance to the argument that you are creating under this Bill cities of the rich and cities of the poor, for it is inevitable, when you come to divide up a great city like London, that the tendency should be to have rich districts and poor districts. What is wanted is an equalisation of the burdens. I would ask your Lordships to approach this Bill with an open mind. Personally I wish it could have been referred to a Committee of your Lordships' House, for you have amongst you many men well acquainted with local government and well able to deal with the details of this Bill. I have no doubt myself that if it had been so referred the Bill would have passed out of the ordeal of that Committee very much improved in many respects. The Bill, however, will come before your Lordships in Committee on Monday next, and I hope that, in considering the Amendments which will be moved, your Lordships will remember the defence that is put forward for this House by its advocates—namely, that it is essentially a House of revision. It certainly seems to some of us on this side of the House that those revising powers are held in abeyance so long as a Conservative Government is in power, and that they only spring into activity when a Liberal Government is in office; but this is a Bill which, as I have said, we do not wish to treat in any sense as a Party measure. We desire to make it as far as possible a good and workable Bill. The Amendments which we intend to put forward will be directed towards improving its administrative details, and I would beg of your Lordships to accept those Amendments in this spirit, and to, at any rate, endeavour to meet some of the views we shall put forward on the various points to which I have called attention.

*THE EARL OF ONSLOW: My Lords, I confess that I heard with very great satisfaction the noble Lord's statement that he did not desire to treat this Bill in a Party spirit. I think this is the first time any member of his Party has given expression to that opinion. The changes of view of the Party to which the noble Lord belongs have been almost as constant and frequent as the ebb and flow of the tide. It will be within the recollection of your Lordships that when the Bill was first introduced expressions of approval

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were given utterance to, and the hope was, I think, expressed that the House of Commons would treat the measure very much in the spirit in which the noble Lord has treated it this evening. But there is a heresy which has been adopted by some noble Lords opposite, and one which has served its purpose not altogether ill from a political point of view, to the effect that there is and always has been a desire on the part of Her Majesty's Government to destroy, or, as they gracefully express it, to "smash" the London County Council. Cabinet Ministers have without effect denied their intention of doing anything of the kind, and therefore I was not surprised, when the Bill was first introduced, and when it was shown that there was no such intention, that there was at once an expression on the part of the friends of the noble Lord opposite of very great pleasure at finding that the dreadful things said against the London County Council had come to naught. The spokesman for the London County Council in the other House said that as the position of the London County Council was not to be seriously interfered with, he wished to join hands with the Government in making this a good Bill. But then came a remarkable change, and there was aroused an extreme and unworthy amount of jealousy of the new bodies which it was proposed to create, and although it had been the distinct policy of the friends of the noble Lords opposite to extend to local bodies large corporate life, which brings with it dignity and responsibility, they did not so view the measure which is now before your Lordships' House. It was declared on the Second Reading in the House of Commons that the Bill implied disintegration in every clause. I am glad that is not the view of the noble Lord opposite. The noble Lord appears to be of the original opinion expressed by the members of his Party that this Bill is, or at any rate could be made, one which would crown the edifice of local government in London. It has been said that the Bill disturbs the existing system, that it fails to simplify and complete it. I think, judging from the speech of the noble Lord who has just addressed the House, that the fault he finds with the Bill is that it does not disturb the existing system enough. If the Bill had proposed to hand over to the County Council all the privileges, the prestige, and, perhaps,

I ought to add, the plate belonging to the Corporation of the City of London, and if it had proposed to adopt the somewhat preposterous suggestion that the area which has been known as the City of Westminster should be called the Westminster District of London and so forth, I think that would have been much more in consonance with the view of the noble Lord. But that is not the view, I am happy to think, which Her Majesty's Government takes of this subject. There has been no attempt in the Bill to destroy or undermine the influence of the London County Council as the great central authority of London. There is one policy, at all events, which this Bill will render difficult to carry out hereafter, and that is the policy of vestry smashing and City smashing. I agree that there is nothing in this Bill which will prevent Parliament from dealing hereafter with the City of London, but I think after the passing of this Bill no Government which desires to enter upon that course will do so with a light heart. The noble Duke has pointed out to your Lordships that the object which the Government had in introducing this Bill was to carry into effect the petition which was addressed to them by a very large and very influential deputation, representing all the larger and more important parishes in London, which waited upon the noble Marquess at the head of the Government and on the noble Duke the Lord President of the Council; and I venture to think that all which that deputation invited the Government to do has been done for them in the Bill which is now before your Lordships' House. They asked for the removal of the stigma attaching to vestrydom; they asked for an alteration in the name and an improvement in the *status* of the local authorities in London; they asked for the transfer to the new municipalities of such powers exercised by the County Council as had been agreed upon between the representatives of the several bodies; they asked that they might have vested in them the powers of the subordinate local authorities appointed under what are known as the Adoptive Acts; they asked that they might be made the rating authorities, and, above all, that they might be freed from all subserviency to the County Council. I believe all these objects, notwithstanding the changes that have been made in the Bill since it was introduced into the House of Commons, are secured in the Bill which your Lord-

ships are asked to read a second time to-night. They have been accomplished by conferring upon the local authorities the title of municipal boroughs, by conferring upon the chairmen the title of mayor, and by reducing the excessive number of those who act upon the various local bodies of London. The noble Lord said he thought there were at the present time some 3,000 representatives on the local boards of the metropolis, but I think if he will add to the vestries and boards of works, the commissioners for public libraries, baths and washhouses, and so forth, he will find that there are not less than 5,000 men at the present moment engaged in administering the local affairs of London. I am sure your Lordships will readily understand that very little dignity or importance can attach to an office which is shared by 5,000 other people. I am glad the noble Lord sees in this Bill the germ, if not the fulfilment, of the completion of local government in London. That is a view which has not been prominently put forward from the other side of the House up to this moment; but I venture to hope that the scales have fallen from the eyes of noble Lords opposite, and that they now see, from the manner in which the Minister in charge of this Bill in the other House of Parliament loyally and frankly adhered to the declarations he made at the outset, that there was no intention to undermine the authority of the County Council. I hope they recognise, also, that the sinister designs which it is supposed the Government entertained had their origin solely in the minds of noble Lords opposite and their friends. The noble Lord has found fault with the Government for not having included in this Bill the reform of the City of London. I should like to know who, in the City of London, asks that its system of government should be reformed. There have been no deputations, as in the case of the vestries, and I venture to say that not one single voice has been raised by any person, whether he dwells in the City by night or works there by day, asking the Government to effect a change as regards that ancient Corporation. Does the noble Lord allege that any injury or any injustice is done by the present system of government to the inhabitants of other parts of the metropolis? I have not heard that any such suggestion has been made, and it

does seem to me that if the people in the City do not want their government reformed, and if the people living in the other parts of London have no cause to allege that they are treated with injustice, then no cause has been shown for making any alteration in the present system of government. The noble Lord entertains considerable objection to the proposal to confer upon the new boroughs the power of promoting and opposing Bills in Parliament.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: I do not object to their having power to oppose Bills; what I object to is the granting to them of the power to promote Bills.

*THE EARL OF ONSLOW: The Government have been desirous of conferring upon these new boroughs all the powers they legitimately can which are exercised and enjoyed by the great municipalities in the other parts of the kingdom, and I cannot see how, under the strict limitations imposed by the Borough Funds Acts, there can be any reason whatever for anticipating the evils which the noble Lord seems to look forward to. The noble Lord objects to the creation of aldermen, but in this case also provincial municipalities enjoy the advantage, if advantage it be, of possessing aldermen. I cannot see why an advantage which they appreciate should be denied to boroughs in London, some of which are larger than all, except three, of the great provincial municipalities in England. The noble Lord asks what the qualification for alderman will be. I am under the impression that any person who is entitled to be elected a councillor may also be elected an alderman. The noble Lord objected to the proposed constitution of the borough of Westminster. I am not going to weary your Lordships with any of the claims which I think Westminster justly has, on account of its antiquity and traditions, to a place of exceptional importance in the government of London. But the noble Lord has selected one qualification, and one qualification only, to which he takes exception. He says that the rateable value of Westminster will be greater than that of any other borough, and greater even than that of the City of London, but he did not give any reason why large rateable value should be a disqualification for the possession of

these important powers. I cannot for the life of me see why the noble Lord should object to the addition of Westminster to the list of the new boroughs. I think he said that three-fifths of the people of Westminster do not desire this change. I do not know how the noble Lord has arrived at the opinion of the people of Westminster, but, being a member of the Vestry of St. Margaret and St. John, Westminster, I know that that body has passed a resolution by a very large majority in favour of the scheme which is now before your Lordships. It is true that under this Bill, not only in the case of Westminster, but in the case of many other areas which will have to be amalgamated, there are a great many people who now serve upon the vestries, and a great many officials who are now in receipt of salaries, whose services will necessarily have to be dispensed with, and although I fully recognise the manner in which they have discharged their duties, I cannot help thinking that such agitation as there has been has largely emanated from those who will be displaced by the Bill, and that there is no solid foundation for the statement of the noble Lord that three-fifths of the people of Westminster are opposed to this proposal. Some meetings have, I know, been held. One meeting was convened at St. James's Hall on March 28, when 2 per cent. of the electors attended. No more than thirty-seven of these voted, this number representing three-fourths of 1 per cent. of the voters. Another meeting was held at St. Martin's Hall, presided over by my noble friend Lord Wemyss, to which 11,000 people were invited, but at which no more than 100 were present. The majority of these were vestrymen, and they might just as well have stayed at home in their vestry and passed their resolution for all the weight it had as expressing the opinion of the parishioners. The fact is, the people of London up to the present time have taken very small interest indeed in the election of the local bodies. In one ward in my parish, up to 1895, there had been no contest for thirty years, and in another parish there positively had never been a contest at all. On one occasion, when some objection was taken to the election of one of the vestrymen, he examined his nomination paper, and asked, "Who are the two people who have nominated me?" He was informed

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that one was the bank messenger and the other a stableman in the mews round the corner. There being no contest this gentleman was declared elected, so that these two men practically elected a vestryman. The powers which it is proposed to transfer under this Bill have, as we know, been agreed upon by the local authorities and the London County Council. There is one power, however, to which I would desire to draw your Lordships' attention, which was not the subject of agreement between the County Council and the local authorities, and yet which, I venture to think, is almost the most important power which is proposed to be conferred upon these new councils. I refer to the power which enables them to undertake the duty of housing the working classes under Part III. of the Housing Act. I am in a position to know something of this matter, and I can confidently say that this question of the housing of the poor is one of the most pressing and one of the most burning problems which the people of London have to face at the present time. It is somewhat remarkable, I think, that in this great metropolis, where there are large numbers of unselfish citizens, with leisure and wealth, who devote themselves with great assiduity to works of philanthropy, there is no interest taken in the administration of local affairs. I venture to hope that to some extent, at any rate, the reproach in that respect which rests upon London in signal contrast to the civic patriotism which we find in provincial cities, such as Birmingham and Glasgow, may at length be removed. We know that—

"The best laid schemes o' mice an' men
Gang aft agley."

but I hope we may have discovered the remedy for the state of affairs to which I have referred. It may be that the causes are deeper seated than we have any knowledge of, but I think your Lordships will agree with me that so far as the Legislature is concerned, all has been done by the measure now before your Lordships' House that can be done to produce and to encourage a spirit of civic patriotism in London. I hope—and I trust I may not be disappointed—that the result will be that this great hive of human beings, the greatest which the world has ever seen, may become a city that all subjects of the Empire of the Queen may be proud of, as

exemplifying the system of local government which is particularly the birthright of Englishmen. I hope it may become a sweet and cleanly city, that the health and longevity of its citizens may be living proofs of the care bestowed upon it by those to whom it will be entrusted, and with that hope in view I urge your Lordships to give a Second Reading to this Bill, which, I trust, will pass through all its stages in your Lordships' House without any serious emendation or alteration.

***LORD MONKSWELL:** If my noble friend Lord Tweedmouth thought it necessary on his part to deprecate any feeling that might be aroused in your Lordships' minds unfavourable to what he was about to say owing to the circumstance that he was a member of the London County Council, I am afraid that I stand much more in need than he did of the tolerance of your Lordships in the few remarks I am about to make, because I am even more identified with the London County Council than the noble Lord, having been a member of it since its formation, and closely associated with the Progressive party during the whole of that time. I agree with the noble Earl who has just sat down in one thing—namely, that the Bill has been enormously improved during its passage through the House of Commons. I am one of those who thought, and there are many who thought with me, that the Bill as it was originally introduced went far to justify the most alarmist rumours that were rife owing to a speech made by the noble Marquess the Prime Minister, in which he coupled the sinister word "suicide" with the London County Council. The noble Earl (the Earl of Onslow) said he was extremely satisfied with the Bill as it now stands, but if he entirely and cordially agrees with the principle of the Amendments that were carried in the House of Commons I do not think he could have been a very fervent admirer of the Bill as it was first introduced. The Amendments that have been inserted involved the gravest questions of principle, particularly with regard to one of the clauses to which we took the greatest exception—namely, the clause dealing with the transfer of powers. That clause has been absolutely remodelled in the House of Commons, and if the noble Earl thought the original

clause a good one, he must of necessity regard the present clause as a very bad one. The clause as it was originally drafted gave every possible facility for the transfer of powers from the County Council, but absolutely no facility for their transfer to the County Council, and provisions were introduced which would have resulted in the transfer to one municipal authority after another, bit by bit, of the powers of the London County Council. Then, with regard to the financial arrangements, if the noble Earl thought it right that the vestries should not be what he calls 'subservient to the County Council in financial matters, how can he agree with the present clause, which says that, subject to appeal, the London County Council shall still be the authority to ratify loans to local authorities? In the matter of the audit we have also carried our point, and the Bill has been very much improved since it was first introduced. The noble Earl did not set a very good example to us to treat the Bill in a non-Party spirit. He said, for instance, that we were unworthily jealous of the powers of the vestries and wanted to minimise those powers. As a matter of fact, during the whole time I have been on the County Council I have over and over again said to my constituents, and also in my speeches in the County Council, that my great desire is that every single power that can reasonably be transferred from the London County Council to the local bodies should be transferred. I entirely approve of their having more powers if those powers can be given consistently with the good government of London. I cannot see how, by giving the chairmen of these new borough councils the titles of mayor, you can do much good, and I am not sure that you will not do a certain amount of harm. And for this reason: Under the new system it will be impossible for a man to retain the office of mayor for more than a year, or, at most, two years. It has been the usual custom of the London vestries, when they had a good chairman, to retain him as long as possible, but I doubt very much whether that will be done under the present Bill, as, if there is any glamour attached to the position of mayor, it will be considered right that there should be annual elections to the mayoralty. There are just one or two observations I should like to make

Lord Monckswell.

with regard to the speech of the noble Duke the Lord President of the Council. He has echoed the cry of the Tory Party that the County Council is an overworked body, and that, being an overworked body, it is extremely wrong of the members to ask for more work. But what we say is that, even granting that the County Council is overworked, it does not necessarily follow that we ought not to ask for more powers, especially as there is other work which could, with equal efficiency, be transferred to other bodies. Proposals with that object have been mooted from time to time in the County Council. It has been suggested that the industrial schools should be taken away from the Council and placed under the control of the School Board, and also that the asylums, which take up a large amount of time, should be relegated to the Asylums Board. There is a curious omission in the Bill if, as the noble Earl said, the intention of the Government was to glorify the vestries. The way to glorify the vestries is to give them important work to do. There is a most important work which could have been given to these local bodies—namely, the administration of the Poor Law. My chief object, however, in rising is to point out that doubts are entertained in many quarters as to whether the Bill carries into effect the avowed intention of its authors with regard to the maintenance of public libraries and baths and washhouses. The Bill undoubtedly contemplates the efficient maintenance of those institutions. There is a clause in the Bill to the effect that the Commissioners may provide for their efficient maintenance, but it is doubtful whether in certain cases the powers of the Commissioners are sufficient to enable them to efficiently maintain certain libraries, and whether they are not so hampered that any scheme for the maintenance of libraries and baths and washhouses would not work grievous injustice. As your Lordships are aware, libraries and baths and washhouses are set up under Adoptive Acts, so called because the local authorities may or may not adopt them at their pleasure. Of course, adopting these Acts generally means a rate. I should like to ask Her Majesty's Government what will take place under the present provisions of the Bill when a district containing public libraries and baths and washhouses is amalgamated

with another district which has not adopted these Acts. I am not certain whether difficulties will in practice arise in the case of baths and washhouses, but they will certainly arise in the case of public libraries. Chelsea, for instance, is divided into two parts — Kensal Town, which is smaller Chelsea, and abuts on Paddington; and larger Chelsea, which abuts on the Thames. Smaller Chelsea is three miles distant from larger Chelsea. Chelsea has adopted the Library Acts, and Paddington has refused to do so. In larger Chelsea, owing, to a great extent to the munificence of Lord Cadogan, we have an excellent library in an excellent situation; but smaller Chelsea, three miles off, cannot make use of that library, and the result is that larger Chelsea, with some generosity, has built and endowed a library for Kensal Town, for the upkeep of which larger Chelsea pays £600 or £700 a year. When Kensal Town is taken away from Chelsea, as it is bound to be under the provisions of this Bill, it is perfectly certain that the Kensal Town Library must be closed unless it gets a contribution from somewhere. The maximum library rate—1d. in the £—only produces in Kensal Town £230, which is insufficient for the purpose of paying interest on the building debt. What I want to know is, how, under this Bill, Kensal Town is to get the money necessary to maintain the library, and what the powers are in this respect which the Commissioners may exercise. It is almost certain that Kensal Town will be united to Paddington, and I should like to know if the Commissioners can make Paddington, which has refused to adopt the Acts, pay for the Kensal Town Library. I can quite understand that Paddington may say that it is illegal on the part of the Commissioners to make them pay this library rate when they have over and over again refused to adopt the Library Acts, and they may possibly call in the aid of Clause 9, Sub-section 4, which says:

“Where any of the adoptive Acts, or any local or other Act, does not extend to the whole borough, any rate required to meet the expenses incurred under the Act shall, subject to the provisions of any scheme under this Act, be levied together with, and as an additional item of, the general rate over the area to which the Act extends.”

If the Commissioners have no right to rate Paddington, which has taken over the area in which the library stands, the only

way to maintain it is to compel Chelsea to pay for the up-keep of a library over which it would have no control, which, in my opinion, would be a monstrous injustice. Therefore I ask the Government whether under the Bill there is any power to keep up the Kensal Town Library when annexed to Paddington; if there is, whether the Commissioners may charge Kensal Town or Paddington, at their option, or whether the power is confined to rating Kensal Town alone or Paddington alone. When we know what the views of Her Majesty's Government are with regard to this question, we shall be in a position to draft any Amendment we may think necessary in order to secure justice to Chelsea. I do not in the least desire to deny that in some respects the Bill will do good, and I shall vote with pleasure for its Second Reading.

***LORD FARQUHAR**: I must first apologise for venturing to address your Lordships, having so lately become a Member of your Lordships' House. I should not do so now were it not for the fact that I have the honour to be the president of a society which has for its object the fostering of local government in London. I have listened with great attention to all the arguments which have been put forward, both in your Lordships' House this evening and in the House of Commons, on this Bill, and I think I may venture to say that I have really heard no damaging criticism of the Bill. The complaint has been made that this is not a more heroic measure, but the Government have, I think, adopted a wise course in acknowledging that London is too vast and too diverse to be placed under one uniform system of government. The Bill agrees with the happy epigram which is due to the ever-ready wit of the noble Earl Lord Rosebery who said:

“We desire to see London united, not London a unit.”

The Bill proceeds on the only safe and practical lines; and while, on the one hand, it does nothing to weaken or sap the authority of the County Council, it, on the other hand, does everything to raise the status and develop the spirit of the local authorities. The main object of the Bill seems to me to be to strengthen and encourage local spirit. The noble Lord who has just sat down does not appear to think that the change in the

name of the local authorities which is proposed under this Bill will do much good; but I disagree with him on this point. I contend that it will add to the dignity of these bodies, and put them on the same level as the City of London and provincial corporations. By diminishing the number of administrators more select bodies will be created, and I feel sure they will be more efficient, while by adding to the functions discharged by the local bodies the best and ablest men will be attracted. Possibly the Government might have added more to these functions, but as they have not done so I feel sure the matter will soon mend itself. Our democracy is ever requiring increasing administration, and it is not desirable or reasonable to throw every new duty that arises upon the heavily burdened shoulders of the London County Council. If the best and ablest men go on to these new councils, I am certain they will attract plenty of work, and that before long the arrears of London government will be overtaken. It is for these reasons, my Lords, that I beg to humbly thank the Government for having introduced this measure, and also to congratulate them on the very wise course they pursued in ascertaining the views of those most experienced in municipal life before introducing the Bill in the House of Commons.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: My Lords, I wish to make a few observations on the Bill, and perhaps I may be excused for doing so as being specially interested in a Bill which deals with the same subject as the Metropolitan Board of Works Bill, of which, more years ago than I care to say, I had charge in this House. I have little fault to find with the Bill, except that it does not deal with the City. While I appreciate the reasons for which the present Government are unable to adopt the recommendations of the Commission of 1893, I infer, from what the noble Duke said, that he did not look with great repugnance upon the possibility of the City of London being dealt with. The noble Duke also said that this might be hereafter dealt with by the successors of the present Government. I willingly admit that this Bill does not, as far as I can see, in any way obstruct any Government which may think fit to deal with the question of the City; on that point the Bill is fairly drawn and leaves the question where it is

now. Noble Lords opposite are strongly against dealing with the City. We on this side greatly desire to deal with the City, but this Bill does not settle the matter at all. In one respect I think the advantage of the Bill has hardly been sufficiently appreciated. One of the merits of the Bill is that it puts an end to the extremely inconvenient distribution of the districts of London. Nothing could possibly be worse than the present arrangement. When we brought in the Metropolitan Board of Works Bill we were obliged, owing to the great difficulty of carrying any Bill through Parliament at that time, to have recourse to the miserable device of grouping together a certain number of vestries, and giving them power to elect to a Board of Works. That was a mere makeshift, and now, happily, it will be ended. In that respect the Bill will be an unmixed blessing to London. The only blot I see on the measure is the creation of the enormous district known as Greater Westminster. I cannot understand what has induced the Government to insert that provision. Some people have suggested that the Government wish to set up Greater Westminster as a sort of rival to the County Council. I dismiss that from my mind because I do not think it is likely to prove a rival in any sense to the County Council. As I understand it, the object of the Bill is to distribute the different councils in London in such a way as to promote as far as possible good administration. Due regard has been paid to such ancient boroughs as Chelsea, and to other boroughs which may have a sort of separate existence; but as to Westminster a considerable portion of the inhabitants do not desire to be merged in this enormous borough. All agree that Westminster should be made a district, but to constitute this immense new municipality seems to be a very serious and a perfectly uncalled-for blot on an otherwise well-drawn Bill. There is the case of Wandsworth. Wandsworth is extremely large, and I understand there is a strong desire on the part of the inhabitants that it should be divided. That, however, is a question which may be considered hereafter. I am sorry to say that I have considerable doubt as to the effect upon the administration of the local affairs of London which the transformation of the vestrymen into aldermen and

Lord Farquhar.

councillors will have. I should be delighted to think that that transformation would make them administer the affairs of their district somewhat better than they do at present, for I cannot say I am in the least enamoured of the way they have administered and do administer affairs. I ask anyone who knows London well whether he thinks really that the vestries have well managed the roads of London. The roads in the district of St. George's, Hanover-square, are habitually kept in a most disgraceful condition. I stirred up the inhabitants of Belgrave Square to make some remonstrance, and some attempt at repair was made. This is a matter which concerns not only the people of the parish of St. George's, but all those who live in the metropolis and have to pass through the parish. It is worth considering whether some machinery cannot be introduced in the Bill to compel the bodies concerned to do their duty in respect to roads. Such machinery has been found extremely convenient in respect to country districts. In those districts any ratepayer may complain of the state of a road. If complaint is made the County Council makes inquiry, and if the complaint is well founded they call upon the local authority to repair the road within a fixed time. If they do not do so, the County Council repairs the road and charges all the expenses on the district. The possession of that power by County Councils has had a wonderfully good effect. Again, I think that the uncleanness of the streets of London reflects great discredit upon the administration. There are a great many other matters in which great neglect is displayed. I do hope that there will be elected upon the new councils men who will carry into effect the sanitary duties entrusted to them. One of the first things they ought to turn their attention to is a careful and impartial enforcement of the sanitary regulations in respect to houses, for in many parts of the metropolis the houses are in a most insanitary condition. As a whole the Bill is one of great interest to the inhabitants of the metropolis. It is not a heroic measure, and may not seem to be of such great importance as some of the far-stretching political measures with which we have to deal; but as regards the individual comfort of the inhabitants of this vast metropolis few Bills of more importance have been sub-

mitted to the consideration of your Lordships.

EARL RUSSELL: My Lords, I will not detain your Lordships for more than one moment, but there are some considerations to which very little attention has been paid. Anyone who approaches this question or considers it in any way whatever must at once admit the difficulty of dealing with the government of London, and I would not be behind in recognising the difficulties of all kinds with which Her Majesty's Government must have been confronted. I do not propose to follow the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Onslow), who twitted those with whom I generally work with their change of attitude, but I think one might fairly say that there was justification for the suspicion with which the birth of this Bill was regarded. Statements had been made by Her Majesty's Ministers which had led those interested in London government to expect a measure of a very reactionary and retrograde character, and I must say that the Bill as first introduced did seem to us to be a reactionary measure. It seemed to make confusion worse confounded, and to disarrange and leave open many questions which were considered settled. But the Bill as it has reached your Lordships' House is very different to what it was when introduced in the House of Commons. Many Amendments of vital consequence have been made in it, and safeguards have been adopted which remove many of the objections to it. There still, however, remains a curious fallacy in the framework of the Bill. The new districts are to be called metropolitan boroughs, and to have mayors and aldermen; but they will be devoid of many of the attributes of municipal boroughs. They will not manage their own police or fire brigade, and only one-sixth of the body will be aldermen, instead of one-third. Again, they will have a different franchise to ordinary municipal boroughs, and a different qualification for their members. The borough councils are to be endowed with the power of promoting Bills in Parliament, a power which we are justified in looking upon with suspicion, because the Government have refused to limit it in any way. The reason why I think the Bill has an objectionable framework is that by it the unity of London has been hampered, and that it will be rendered more difficult in

the future to deal with this question. Of course, it is perfectly obvious that, in a metropolis of the size of London, local management must be committed to many local bodies with wide powers. But, in the somewhat alarmist desire of Her Majesty's Government to escape from the supposed terrorism of the London County Council, they seem to have lost sight of the fact that each of these areas is only a part of one town which should, as far as possible, be united. I hope that the prevention of unity will not be the result of the Bill, but it is impossible to shut one's eyes to the fact that this is the aim of many who have agitated on this question. I do not wish to detain the House longer, but only to protest against any attempt to set back or destroy the chance of unifying London.

On Question, agreed to.

Bill read 2^a accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next.

House adjourned at ten minutes before
Seven of the clock, to Thursday
next, half-past Ten of the clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 20th June 1899.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

SHOTLEY BRIDGE AND CONSETT DISTRICT GAS BILL.

Lords' Amendments considered, and
agreed to.

DERBY CORPORATION TRAMWAYS, ETC., BILL.

Read the third time, and passed.

JONES' DIVORCE BILL. [Lords.]

Read the third time, and passed, with-
out Amendment.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (MONEY) BILL.

Read the third time, and passed.

BEXHILL AND ROTHERFIELD RAIL- WAY BILL.

As amended, considered.

Ordered, that Standing Orders 223 and
243 be suspended, and that the Bill be
now read the third time.—(*Dr. Farquhar-*
son.)

Bill accordingly read the third time,
and passed.

Earl Russell.

BRADFORD TRAMWAYS AND IM- PROVEMENT BILL.

As amended, considered.

Ordered, that Standing Orders 223 and
243 be suspended, and that the Bill be
now read the third time.—(*Dr. Farquhar-*
son.)

Bill accordingly read the third time,
and passed. [New Title.]

ROYAL ASSENT.

Message to attend the Lords Com-
missioners by Black Rod.

The House went, and, being returned,

MR. SPEAKER reported the Royal
Assent to a number of Bills (see first item
in House of Lords report this day: *ante*,
page 1).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 14) BILL. (By Order.)

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon,
&c.): I move that the Provisional Order
Bill No. 14 be referred to the Police and
Sanitary Committee of this House. I
know that that Committee has been a
Committee rather to deal with questions
on Private Bills—municipal questions,
where any powers which depart from the
general law of the land are sought to be
conferred upon municipalities. Such
Private Bills are always referred to the
Police and Sanitary Committee. But I
think the time has arrived when some of
these Provisional Orders ought also to be
referred to this Committee. I cannot
help thinking that the powers which are
sought to be given to some of these local
authorities, subject simply to the super-
vision of an official of the Local Govern-
ment Board, must have escaped the atten-
tion of the House. The powers are
exceedingly large, and what is still more
extraordinary is that by means of Pro-
visional Orders, which are supposed to be
something inferior and are not scrutinised
so carefully as are Private Bills, where
there is no evidence taken before the
House, and where Committees of the
House of Commons do not examine into
the details, powers are sought by muni-
cipalities which Committees of the House
of Commons have consistently refused to
confer by means of Private Bills. I do
not make complaint that this Bill is any
departure from precedent. I am sorry to

say that it seems to be the sort of Bill which has been passing for some time without any challenge at all. It seeks to confer on the local authorities power, subject to the sanction of the Local Government Board, to make bye-laws regulating the sands. That has always gone through the Police and Sanitary Committee without any question. But when we came to other powers which are sought to be given, there are powers which the House of Commons has invariably refused to give. The first is to make bye-laws for regulating trade on the sands. That is really a very sweeping power. You are not to be allowed to sell anything except subject to the bye-law. But what I object to more particularly is the power with regard to preaching or lecturing on the sands. No one is to be allowed to lecture on the sands except in accordance with certain regulations which are made by the local authority, subject to the sanction of the Local Government Board. That is a power which Committees of the House of Commons time after time have absolutely refused to confer upon any municipality at all, with the one single exception of Southend. That was conferred in 1894, but has never been put into force; and the Police and Sanitary Committee, whichever Party happened to be in power, has consistently refused to follow that example. I object to these powers being given by these Provisional Orders without their being investigated by some Committee of this House. The party seeking this power is a small town in North Wales. The powers are large, and if the circumstances were exceptional I could quite understand the Local Government Board and the House of Commons conferring these powers. But what are the circumstances? The town is small; the population is 7,000; the sands are the only free open space in the whole town where such meetings can be held or such lectures or preachings given. The sands are exceedingly extensive, being about two or three miles in front of the town; they are very wide, and there is plenty of room. There was a local inquiry before an officer of the Local Government Board, and there was no suggestion made on the part of the Town Council that there had been any real abuse in connection with the matter. A Protestant lecturer, a clergyman of the Church of England, came down to Rhyl and addressed meetings on the foreshore

on the question of Ritualism. There was some disturbance, but no actual breach of the peace. He was considerably interrupted by the Ritualistic supporters of the local clergy, and in the end those who sympathised with Ritualistic views appealed to the Town Council, who being fearful of offending some of the rich visitors to the town, came to the conclusion that the best plan was to prohibit this gentleman from preaching on the sands at all. But they discovered that they had no power to do that, so they applied to the Local Government Board for the necessary authority. The reply was:

"We cannot give you power to prohibit the holding of these meetings on the sands, but we will give you powers to regulate them by bye-laws."

But what I want to point out to the House is that the powers it is proposed to confer are tantamount to a prohibition of the meetings altogether. It will be found at Rhyl that the crowd is generally to be found within an area of 500 yards on either side of the place where these meetings are held, and if the bye-laws are so framed as to prohibit meetings at that particular place that will be equal to prohibiting the meetings altogether. Surely unless a very strong case is made out this House should give no local authority power to make bye-laws which may have the effect of putting a stop to freedom of speech in the only open space in that part of the town. As the Secretary to the Local Government Board must know very well, since he has had an opportunity of reading the evidence given by his inspector, there was absolutely no case made out for any interference. There was only evidence of one slight disturbance, which was not attributable to anything done by the clergyman whose meetings were interfered with. The object of the Council is no doubt to suppress these meetings, and not merely to regulate them. That was, in fact, admitted by some of the councillors who gave evidence in the course of the inquiry. There was no attempt at concealment on that point. But there was an effort to make a compromise between the different sections—between those who were fighting for absolute freedom of speech and those who were for regulating or suppressing the meetings. An agreement was arrived at between the repre-

sentatives of the Town Council and of the Local Free Church Council to the effect that there should be absolute freedom of speech between certain points on the Rhyl sands. But the Town Council subsequently repudiated that agreement, thus showing quite clearly that their object was not so much to frame regulations which would prevent disturbance and smooth matters as to make it impossible for persons who were obnoxious to the majority of the Town Council to hold any meeting at all. I know that some teetotal lecturers occasionally go on to the sands, and there are gentlemen on the Town Council who are interested in the liquor trade, and who naturally object to the sands being used for the purpose of making appeals to their customers which may have the effect of reducing their profits. It has nevertheless not been shown that this lecturing and preaching has interfered with the amenities of the place, and I therefore appeal to the Government to send this Provisional Order to the Police and Sanitary Committee to be reported upon. The powers it proposes to confer are of an extensive and sweeping character, and ought to be thoroughly examined. I do not think the delay involved would prevent the Bill passing into law this session.

Motion made, and Question proposed—

"That the Order for the committal of the Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 14) Bill be read, and discharged, and that the Bill be committed to the Police and Sanitary Committee."—(*Mr. Lloyd-George.*)

MR. ERNEST GRAY (West Ham, N.): I venture to hope that the House will not adopt the course recommended by the hon. Gentleman opposite. After all, the power sought by the Rhyl Council is a very simple one, and one which the House should not hesitate to confer upon it. For many years the Rhyl District Council has been in the habit of allowing a large portion of the foreshore to be used by various religious and irreligious bodies, who have had assigned to them fixed spots for which they have paid a rental amounting in the aggregate to £400 or £500 annually. Everything went on satisfactorily until, unhappily, the miserable dispute arose between High and Low Churchmen, who had taken up positions on this magnificent foreshore and spent much of their time in wrangling on theological questions. I am

Mr. Lloyd-George.

not surprised that the Rhyl Council, anxious to preserve peace and quietness in the interests of the inhabitants and the visitors, have asked power to make bye-laws, not to put down freedom of speech, but to keep a certain portion of the foreshore free from these disputants. It is my painful experience on many Sundays during the summer to see what is going on on the Embankment near to my house—where, morning, afternoon, and evening, Churchmen, Socialists, and atheists spend hours in what I can only characterise as more or less blasphemous proceedings. I cannot therefore feel surprised that the Rhyl Council strongly objects to a similar abuse of freedom on their sands. This, so far as the Rhyl Council is concerned, is not a Party question. The resolution to apply for these powers was carried with practical unanimity in a Council composed of twelve Nonconformists and six Churchmen, while an election which has since taken place has resulted in the return of four candidates who declined to pledge themselves to support the repeal of the Order, and the defeat of two who gave such a pledge. The desire of the Council is to secure that the residents and visitors may enjoy Sunday in something like peace.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: We do not propose to interfere with the esplanades. I am confining myself to the foreshore and sands.

MR. ERNEST GRAY: But the foreshore and sands can be seen from the esplanade, and surely the authorities have a right to prevent the peace being disturbed by disputes which only minister to the vanity of the disputants, and do nobody any good whatever. I strongly object to the Provisional Order being sent to a Committee. An inquiry has already been made by the Local Government Board inspector, and, after all, no bye-laws can become operative until the approval of the Local Government Board has been obtained, as well as of two other State Departments. Surely there is sufficient guarantee that freedom of speech will not be interfered with.

MR. SAMUEL SMITH (Flintshire): As Rhyl happens to be part of my constituency, I may, perhaps, be allowed to say a few words, especially as there is a considerable division of opinion on the

subject among my constituents. I have been appealed to by citizens of Rhyl to bring the matter before the House with a view to securing guarantees for freedom of speech. Undoubtedly at Rhyl there is a grand stretch of sands, which constitute a most convenient place for carrying on religious and temperance services. I do not agree with the hon. Member opposite that these services consist of nothing but wrangling. A great many most valuable religious services are carried on, especially among children, and I do not think that because these disputants to which the hon. Gentleman has referred have appeared on the scene, therefore the right of free speech should be taken from all. I think the House should always be most jealous of any interference with the right of free speech. The liberties of this country have been won and preserved by free speech. I am not opposed to reasonable regulation, and I think such powers should exist, and that the Police and Sanitary Committee might well take care that proper rules were framed. This subject was fully discussed a few years ago in connection with the case of Eastbourne, and we know that this House upset the very stringent rule which the Eastbourne authorities had adopted. I support sending this Order to the Police and Sanitary Committee, because I think care should be taken to prevent any future Council at Rhyl using their powers for the suppressing of free speech.

MR. MCKENNA (Monmouth, N.): As a member of the Police and Sanitary Committee, before whom questions of this sort are usually considered, may I say that there seems to be some misapprehension as to the recent practice of the Committee on this matter. The Local Government Board appear to rely on the precedent of Southend, in 1895, the Bill affecting which was very much in the form of this Order. But during the last three years the Committee have had before them a great many Bills dealing with seaside places in which this very question has been raised, and which have also been reported upon by the Home Secretary. The Home Office, it will be seen from the Report, are against the Local Government Board in this matter. The most recent precedents are those of St. Anne's-on-Sea, Yarmouth, and Paignton, and in the last named the clause passed by the Committee and

approved by the Home Secretary read: "Provide for the preservation of order and good conduct among the persons frequenting the sea-shore." Thus the local authority are given powers to make bye-laws for this specific purpose. But if you go beyond that, and give the Rhyl Council power to suppress public speaking, you interfere with the liberty of private citizens in a way which in recent years the Police and Sanitary Committee has not been willing to sanction. I think we shall be making a great mistake if we go outside the usual practice in this matter.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, Tyrone, S.): There are two things I will not enter upon in this discussion. I do not propose to discuss the Provisional Order procedure of the House, for that has nothing to do with the point we are now discussing, and most assuredly I will not discuss the religious question. The people of Rhyl have their rights, independent of preachers on the foreshore, and surely these rights are of some consequence. The Bill before the House contains three Provisional Orders—one affecting the Isle of Thanet, another affecting Reading, and the third affecting Rhyl; and I think there will be a serious objection on the part of those concerned with the first two Orders to the proposal to commit the Bill to the Police and Sanitary Committee.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I could not divide the Bill. I was obliged to take it as a whole.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: What is the case in regard to this Order? The ordinary course has been followed in regard to it. Application was made to the Local Government Board by the Urban Council; an experienced Inspector was sent down to hold a local inquiry, and the evidence shows that there has been trouble in connection with these proceedings on the foreshore as far back as 1878. The Inspector reports that the Commissioners purchased from the Crown the greater portion of the foreshore, hoping they would get greater control, but in reality they did not improve their position. After all, they are now only asking for powers which other local authorities possess.

MR. MCKENNA: None have been granted since 1895.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I feel bound to point out that any bye-laws for the regulation of the foreshore which the Urban Council may pass under the Bill must satisfy three State Departments before they can come into operation—the Board of Trade, the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, and the Local Government Board; and does anyone imagine that these central Departments will sanction a bye-law interfering with free speech? The object of the Urban Council is not to regulate the speech of the preachers, because that is perfectly free, but to regulate the places where the speech may be delivered. Similar powers have been given to the Harrogate Corporation to regulate meetings on the Stray, and to the Southend authorities in respect of the beach at that place. Those authorities are empowered to set apart from time to time portions of the beach on which persons may deliver lectures and sermons, and to prohibit the use of any other part for such purpose. I submit that what has been done in those Private Bills is exactly what is asked for by the Rhyl Urban Council. The Order does not raise the question of free speech at all; it simply proposes to give the Council the right to regulate certain things, and if they abuse that power the central authorities will certainly correct them. I hope the House will allow the Bill to proceed in the ordinary way.

*MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield): The hon. Gentleman has expressed his surprise that my hon. friend proposes to refer to the Police and Sanitary Committee a Bill which deals with three Provisional Orders, whereas his objection only applies to one. But I assume he could not have referred a section of the Bill to that Committee, and consequently the objection only proves the inconvenience of grouping together Provisional Orders relating to different places in one and the same Bill. The second objection he raises is that there is no precedent for such a step. But, surely, if the course proposed is reasonable and rational it is right to suggest it. Thirdly, the suggestion is that bye-laws cannot be framed by the Rhyl Council without the sanction of certain public bodies, and we are asked, Is it likely that any State

Department would seek to restrict the right of free speech? I am old enough to remember the time when public bodies did seek to restrain the right of free speech, and I do not wish to put it in the power of any such bodies to do it again. This House, when it gives powers to public bodies, is bound to have some guarantee that such power shall be exercised with discretion and with strict regard to the requirements of justice. I am not acquainted with the composition of the Urban Council of Rhyl, but I am entitled to form an opinion from the public utterances of certain members at the inquiry which took place before the inspector. I will quote a couple of sentences from the evidence of official witnesses. The Chairman of the Council, after saying that the Council wished to have discretionary powers, added, "If I had my way I would prohibit all meetings absolutely." And the Town Clerk frankly admitted that the Council wanted the powers to control the preachers and teetotal lecturers; for "sometimes they are men of very extreme views, stiff-necked and strong-headed." Now, the hon. Member for South Tyrone is a warm advocate of temperance; does he recognise his portrait in that description? I am quite sure he would not allow himself to be muzzled when seeking to advocate the principles of temperance on Rhyl sands or anywhere else. I wish to call the attention of the House to the fact that it is not called upon to do anything more than refer the matter to a competent tribunal. I hold that my hon. friend has made out a *prima facie* case for the further consideration of the matter before it receives the final sanction of this House. May I remind the House of what occurred at Eastbourne, where there was a conflict between the local authorities and the Salvation Army? Surely that is sufficient to warn the House of the dangers involved in granting powers under such an Order as this.

*MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): Representing as I do one of the three towns interested in this Bill, I wish to say that so far as Ramsgate is concerned, happily none of these religious disputes have occurred; but I would remind the House that almost identical words are embodied in the Ramsgate Provisional Order as those to

which exception is taken in the case of Rhyl; and, representing as I do the inhabitants of Ramsgate, I say that they strongly object to the elimination of these words, or to this Bill being in any way delayed. Remember that if this Bill goes to the Police and Sanitary Committee they must act on general principles, and if they omit the words in the case of Rhyl they must do so also in regard to Ramsgate. I may mention that in the case of the London Parks Regulation Act, nearly thirty years since, I myself carried in the Select Committee to which the Bill was referred a proviso that "no person shall deliver or invite any person to deliver any public address in a park accept in accordance with the rules of the park." That proviso, although in the first instance it led to the dropping of the Bill for the session, was adopted by Mr. Gladstone's Government the following year, and unanimously accepted by both Houses of Parliament. A similar power is exercised ruthlessly by the London County Council in all open spaces under their control, with general approval. What I wish to point out is that what it is proposed to give to the Rhyl Council is simply the power exercised by the authorities of the Royal parks, by the London County Council, and I believe by almost all the chief local authorities in the country. I only hope the House will follow that precedent.

*MR. LEWIS (Flint Boroughs): There is an important difference between regulating the right of free speech in the Royal parks and the case with which this Order deals, because regulations regulations relating to the Royal parks can be discussed in this House every year, whereas this Bill will be passed once for all. I say that here the right of free speech is in question. What did the hon. Member for East Ham say? He said, "We want to get these people—the preachers and the teetotal lecturers—out of the way of visitors on the esplanade." What does that mean? It means that the right of free speech is to be altogether suppressed on the foreshore.

MR. ERNEST GRAY: There are large portions of the foreshore at either end of the town where these disputes may rage without injury to anybody.

*MR. LEWIS: And you expect the teetotal lecturers to go into the country and waste their eloquence on the sand-hills. I want to point out what will be the inevitable result of such regulation, and that is the suppression of the right of free speech on the foreshore at Rhyl. I have read very carefully the report of the inquiry held by the Inspector of the Local Government Board, and the evidence is simply overwhelming against any suppression of the right of free speech on the Rhyl foreshore. The House has to consider an extremely important question, and I do hope that at this initial stage it will take the course recommended by my hon. friend, and send this Bill to a Committee, where a compromise can be arrived at which will be satisfactory to both supporters and opponents of this particular part of the Bill.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): The hon. Member who has just sat down has shown the real character of this opposition. They not only want the right of free speech preserved, but they also want the town of Rhyl to keep an audience for them. They will not go out into the wilderness like St. John, but they want to go into the centre of the town, where they can send round the hat. Now, is it reasonable that such a power should be given under a Provisional Order? After all, what is it that is being given to the local authority? It is not the power to prohibit services or ordinary utterances, but simply to define the places where those services and utterances shall be delivered, and where such meetings shall be held. It seems to me a most excellent provision. Take a few antagonists, like, for instance, on the one side the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Local Government Board, and on the other side my right hon. friend the Member for Thanet—are those two antagonists to be allowed the whole of the foreshore, and is the local authority not to be allowed to mark out a square or a 40 ft. ring for them in such a manner as will enable the spectators around them to arrive at a reasonable conclusion as to the value of their arguments? The right of free speech is not involved, and all that is sought for by the opponents of this Provisional Order is the right to send round the hat.

*MR. PERKS (Lincolnshire, S.): I have not the slightest doubt that if my hon. friend who has just addressed the House had to speak upon the sands at Rhyl or any other sands and spoke with the humour which distinguishes him he would secure a very large audience. I happen to have in my hand a letter from the chairman of the Rhyl Local Board in which he states some of the reasons of these good people at Rhyl, who are ratepayers, lodging-house keepers, and hotel proprietors. Their object, I fear, is to keep away people whose nervous system is likely to be upset by a speech such as that delivered by my hon. friend the Member for King's Lynn. It seems perfectly clear that what these local authorities desire is to send out these preachers and speakers into what my hon. friend calls the wilderness, where they can indulge in what a previous speaker has described very ignorantly as an interminable wrangle. The right of preaching in the open spaces of this country is not only claimed by preachers of the Gospel throughout this land, but by political and social speakers; and if you challenge and curtail that right in the case of religious speakers and preachers, the time will come, and come very quickly, when it will be used not only by imperial authorities as a muzzle, but by local bodies. There is very great danger of these clauses being surreptitiously slipped through this House in these Provisional Orders. It was only a session or two ago that a most objectionable series of bye-laws were authorised in a Provisional Order of the County of Kent. Under those bye-laws people who have stood up in the public thoroughfares in the villages of Kent, and preached the Gospel where their forefathers had done for ages past, have been fined by the magistrates, and in default these good men have been thrown into the gaols of the county. Appeals were made against that infamous procedure, but while the Home Secretary—with a speed which generally marks a Government Department—was inquiring into the position of these poor men they fulfilled their sentences before any remedy could be applied. I do trust that we shall not allow this Provisional Order to pass in this form. There may be cases

which distinguish Ramsgate from Rhyl. I do not agree that you must apply the same order to different towns and different circumstances. What is this Police and Sanitary Committee for if it is not to be allowed to exercise a reasonable judgment? I do hope that the House will not be led away by the flood of eloquence which proceeded from preceding speakers, but that they will agree to this Provisional Order being dealt with in such a way that regulations may be adopted in conformity with the law of this country in Rhyl. We should not do anything in this House which will lead the religious classes of this country, who cherish the right to free speech, to suppose that this House is trying to put into the hands of local authorities the power to suppress one of the most cherished privileges which we now enjoy.

*MR. H. J. WILSON (York West Riding, Holmfirth): There is one matter which I think ought to be put right in this Debate. It is perfectly true that in the two cases to which reference has been made the Police and Sanitary Committee have already sanctioned clauses of this kind. I have not, however, heard it stated that there are four or five other cases where the Police and Sanitary Committee have rejected a clause of this kind. As I was not present during the earlier part of this discussion, I shall not venture to speak on the question of procedure or the local circumstances in the case of Rhyl. Next, I heard the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Thanet say that the Police and Sanitary Committee would be obliged to act the same in one case as in the other, but that is precisely what they have not done. That Committee judges according to the evidence in each case, and, as I have just said, it has granted the clause in two or three cases and rejected it in four or five cases.

Question put.

The House divided: Ayes, 107; Noes, 200. (Division List No. 200.)

AYES.

Allan, William (Gateshead)
 Allen, Wm. (Newc.-u.-Lyme)
 Allison, Robert Andrew
 Austin, M.
 Bainbridge, Emerson
 Baker, Sir John
 Barlow, John Emmott
 Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
 Billson, Alfred
 Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
 Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
 Buxton, Sydney Charles
 Caldwell, James
 Cameron, Sir Chas. (Glasgow)
 Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
 Cawley, Frederick
 Channing, Francis Allston
 Clark, Dr. G. B. (Caithness-sh.)
 Clough, Walter Owen
 Colville, John
 Commins, Andrew
 Crombie, John William
 Davitt, Michael
 Dillon, John
 Doogan, P. C.
 Duckworth, James
 Dunn, Sir William
 Evershed, Sydney
 Farquharson, Dr. Robert
 Fenwick, Charles
 Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
 Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
 Glastone, Rt. Hon. H. John
 Goddard, Daniel Ford
 Gold, Charles
 Gourley, Sir E. Temperley
 Harwood, George

Hayne, Rt. Hn. Charles Seale
 Hazell, Walter
 Hedderwick, Thomas Chas. H.
 Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Chas. H.
 Hogan, James Francis
 Horniman, Frederick John
 Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
 Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
 Jacoby, James Alfred
 Johnston, William (Belfast)
 Joicey, Sir James
 Jordan, Jeremiah
 Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John
 Kinloch, Sir J. George Smyth
 Langley, Batty
 Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Camb.)
 Leese, Sir J. F. (Accrington)
 Leng, Sir John
 Leuty, Thomas Richmond
 Lewis, John Herbert
 Lyell, Sir Leonard
 MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
 McGhee, Richard
 McKenna, Reginald
 Maddison, Fred.
 Mappin, Sir Frederick Thorpe
 Mendl, Sigis. und Ferdinand
 Moore, Arthur (Londonderry)
 Morgan, J. L. (Carmarthen)
 Morley, Charles (Breckshire)
 Morton, E. J. C. (Devonport)
 Moulton, John Fletcher
 Norton, Capt. Cecil William
 Oldroyd, Mark
 Palmer, Sir C. M. (Durham)
 Pease, J. A. (Northumb.)
 Perks, Robert William

Pilkington, Sir G. A. (L'ncs. SW)
 Power, Patrick Joseph
 Richardson, J. (Durham, S.E.)
 Roberts, J. H. (Denbighs.)
 Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
 Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
 Schwann, Charles E.
 Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
 Smith, Samuel (Flint)
 Soames, Arthur Wellesley
 Souttar, Robinson
 Stevenson, Francis S.
 Strachey, Edward
 Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
 Sullivan, T. D. (Donegal, W.)
 Tennant, Harold John
 Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
 Thomas, Alf. (Glamorgan, E.)
 Thomas, David A. (Merthyr)
 Trevelyan, Charles Phillips
 Wallace, Robert
 Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
 Warner, Thomas C. T.
 Wedderburn, Sir William
 Weir, James Galloway
 Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
 Wilson, Charles Henry (Hull)
 Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
 Wilson, John (Govan)
 Woodall, William
 Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Hudd'sfd)
 Woods, Samuel
 Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
 Mr. Lloyd-George and Mr.
 Carvell Williams.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
 Aird, John
 Anstruther, H. T.
 Arnold, Alfred
 Arrol, Sir William
 Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis
 Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
 Bagot, Capt. Joceline Fitzroy
 Baird, John George Alexander
 Balcarres, Lord
 Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r)
 Balfour, Rt. Hn. Gerald W. (Leeds)
 Barnes, Frederic Gorell
 Barry, Rt. Hon. A. H. S. (Hunts)
 Barton, Dunbar Plunket
 Bathurst, Hn. Allen Benjamin
 Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
 Beach, W. W. Bramston (Hants)
 Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
 Begg, Ferdinand Faithfull
 Bethell, Commander
 Biddulph, Michael
 Blundell, Colonel Henry
 Bolitho, Thomas Bedford
 Bowles, T. G. (King's Lynn)
 Brodric, Rt. Hon. St. John
 Brookfield, A. Montagu
 Brown, Alexander H.
 Bullard, Sir Harry
 Campbell, Rt. Hn. J. A. (Gl'sg'w)
 Carlile, William Walter
 Carriv, Patrick Geo. Hamilton

Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
 Cecil, Ld. Hugh (Greenwich)
 Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
 Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.)
 Chamberlain, J. Austin (Worc'r)
 Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
 Chelsea, Viscount
 Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
 Coddington, Sir William
 Coghill, Douglas Harry
 Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
 Cripps, Charles Alfred
 Cruddas, William Donaldson
 Curran, Thomas (Sligo, S.)
 Curzon, Viscount
 Dalbiac, Colonel Philip Hugh
 Dalkeith, Earl of
 Dalrymple, Sir Charles
 Davies, Sir H. D. (Chatham)
 Denny, Colonel
 Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
 Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
 Donelan, Captain A.
 Dorington, Sir John Edward
 Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
 Doxford, William Theodore
 Drage, Geoffrey
 Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
 Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
 Farrell, James P. (Cavan, W.)
 Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
 Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (M'nc'r)

Finch, George H.
 Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
 Firbank, Joseph Thomas
 Fisher, William Hayes
 Fison, Frederick William
 FitzGerald, Sir Robert P.
 Flavin, Michael Joseph
 Fletcher, Sir Henry
 Flower, Ernest
 Folkestone, Viscount
 Fox, Dr. Joseph Francis
 Fry, Lewis
 Galloway, William Johnson
 Garrit, William
 Gedge, Sydney
 Gibney, James
 Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
 Goldsworthy, Major-General
 Gordon, Hon. John Edward
 Goschen, Rt. Hn. G. J. (St. George's)
 Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
 Gunter, Colonel
 Halsey, Thomas Frederick
 Hamilton, Rt. Hn. Lord George
 Hammond, John (Carlisle)
 Hamond, Sir C. (Newcastle)
 Hanbury, Rt. Hon. R. W.
 Heath, James
 Heaton, John Henniker
 Hickman, Sir Alfred
 Hill, Rt. Hn. A. S. (Staffs.)
 Hoare, E. Brodie (Hampstead)

Hoare, Samuel (Norwich)
Holland, Hon. L. R. (Bow)
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. H.
Howard, Joseph
Howell, William Tudor
Hozier, Hon. J. Henry Cecil
Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Jolliffe, Hon. H. George
Kimber, Henry
Lafone, Alfred
Lawrence, Sir E. D. (Corn.)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Lecky, Rt. Hon. W. Edw. H.
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn (Swan.)
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Chas. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Liverpool)
Lowles, John
Lowther, Rt. Hon. Jas. (Kent)
Lowther, Rt. Hon. J. W. (Cumb'land)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lubbock, Rt. Hon. Sir John
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Macaleese, Daniel
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
Macona, John C.
MacDonnell, Dr. M. A. (Q. C.)
Maclean, James Mackenzie
M'Iver, Sir L. (Edinburgh, W.)
M'Killop, James
Malcolm, Ian

Manners, Lord Edward W. J.
Marks, Henry Hananel
Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
Milbank, Sir Powlett Chas. J.
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milton, Viscount
Monk, Charles James
More, Robt. J. (Shropshire)
Murray, Rt. Hon. A. Graham (Bute)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Nicol, Donald Ninian
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, J. (Wicklow, W.)
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlingt'n
Penn, John
Phillipotts, Captain Arthur
Pinkerton, John
Pretzman, Ernest George
Priestley, Sir W. O. (Edin.)
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Rankin, Sir James
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir M. W.
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. C. T.
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Round, James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scoble, Sir Andrew Richard

Sharpe, William Edward T.
Spencer, Ernest
Stanley, Hon. A. (Ormskirk)
Stanley, E. Jas. (Somerset)
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stephens, Henry Charles
Stewart, Sir Mark J. M. Taggart
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sutherland, Sir Thomas
Talbot, Rt. Hon. J. G. (Oxf'd Uni.)
Thorburn, Walter
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Usborne, Thomas
Valentia, Viscount
Walrond, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. H.
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Webster, R. G. (St. Pancras)
Welby, Lient.-Col. A. C. E.
Whiteley, H. (Ashton-u.-L.)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Williams, Jos. Powell (Birm.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hon. E. R. (Bath)
Wolf, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wyndham, George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy
Young, Commander (Berks, E.)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Mr. Ernest Gray and Colonel
Milward.

WALKER AND WALLSEND UNION GAS (ELECTRIC LIGHTING) BILL.

Ordered, that in the case of the Walker and Wallsend Union Gas (Electric Lighting) Bill, Standing Order 243 be suspended, and that the Bill be now read the third time.—(*Dr. Farquharson.*)

Bill accordingly read the third time, and passed.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 16) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 7) BILL.

MILITARY LANDS PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

Read the third time, and passed.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 20) BILL.

Read a second time, and committed.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 9) BILL.

Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill, as amended, to be considered Tomorrow.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 11) BILL.

Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill, as amended, to be considered Tomorrow.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (GAS) BILL.

Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill, as amended, to be considered Tomorrow.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PRO- VISIONAL ORDERS (HOUSING OF WORKING CLASSES) (No. 2) BILL.

Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time Tomorrow.

WICK AND PULTENEY HARBOURS BILL. [Lords.]

Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

IONIAN BANK BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table.

LONDON, WALTHAMSTOW, AND EPPING FOREST RAILWAY (No. 2) BILL.

TOTLAND WATER BILL. [Lords.]

FURNESS RAILWAY BILL. [Lords.]

Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (GENERAL POWERS) (RE-COMMITTED) BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table.

PIER AND HARBOUR PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL.

Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill, as amended, to be considered Tomorrow.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—

Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 2) Bill, without Amendment;

Cardiff Railway Bill;

Rhondda Urban District Council Bill, with Amendments.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, “An Act to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Heywood, Longton, Ludlow, Mirfield, Newcastle-under-Lyme, and Rawtenstall.” [Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 12) Bill [Lords].]

Also, a Bill, intituled, “An Act to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 and 1888, relating to Bethnal Green, Blackheath, and Greenwich District (Extension), Lewisham District, and Plumstead.” [Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 15) Bill [Lords].]

Also, a Bill, intituled, “An Act to confer further powers on the Caledonian Railway Company in relation to their

undertaking; to authorise them to deviate certain railways of the North British Railway Company and the Forth and Clyde Junction Railway Company at Stirling; to empower the Callander and Oban and Lochearnhead, St. Fillans, and Comrie Railway Companies to widen and deviate portions of their railways; to enable the Caledonian Railway Company to subscribe to the undertaking of the last-named Company; and for other purposes.” [Caledonian Railway (General Powers) Bill [Lords].]

Also, a Bill, intituled, “An Act to authorise the Caledonian Railway Company and the Great North of Scotland Railway Company to alter and enlarge their Aberdeen Joint Passenger Station, and to construct certain railways and works in connection therewith; and for other purposes.” [Aberdeen Joint Passenger Station Bill [Lords].]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, “An Act for conferring further powers upon the South Staffordshire Tramways Company, with respect to the leasing of Tramways; and for other purposes.” [South Staffordshire Tramways Bill [Lords].]

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 12) BILL [Lords].

Read the first time; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 242.]

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 15) BILL [Lords].

Read the first time; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 243.]

CALEDONIAN RAILWAY (GENERAL POWERS) BILL [Lords].

ABERDEEN JOINT PASSENGER STATION BILL [Lords].

SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE TRAMWAYS BILL [Lords].

Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

GROUND RENTS (TAXATION BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES).

Petition from Llantarnam, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

POOR LAW AMENDMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1845.

Petition from Auldearn, for alteration of law ; to lie upon the Table.

POOR LAW RELIEF (DISFRANCHISEMENT).

Petition from Gateshead, for alteration of law ; to lie upon the Table.

PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour ;—From Edinburgh ;—and Paisley ; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Burton-on-Trent, in favour ; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour ;—From Huttons Ambo ;—Fenton ;—Walker Gate ;—Snarsdale ;—Houghton le Spring (two) ;—Marsden ;—Blackhill ;—Birtley ;—Consett ;—Bishop Auckland ;—Rowlands Gill ;—Ryton (two) ;—Great Lumley ;—Tyne Dock (three) ;—Wolsingham ;—Darlington ;—Little Lumley ;—Byker ;—Park ;—Howden-on-Tyne ;—Wigton ;—Newbiggin-by-the-Sea ;—Newcastle-on-Tyne (four) ;—Corbridge ;—Berwick-on-Tweed ;—Acomb ;—Thirsk ;—Stapleton ;—Great Ayton ;—Deighton ;—Woodford Green ;—Hamsteels ;—Ushaw Moor ;—East Hedley Hope ;—Waterhouses ;—Hebburn-on-Tyne ;—Lantobie ;—South Shields (two) ;—Cote Hill ;—Birdhope-craig ;—Walker-on-Tyne ;—Haydon Bridge ;—Wardley Colliery ;—Pelau ;—Felling ;—Greenside ;—Jarrow ;—Peaces West ;—Blaydon-on-Tyne ;—Dunmow ;—and Reigate ; to lie upon the Table.

TELEGRAPHS (TELEPHONIC COMMUNICATION, &c.) BILL.

Petition from Edinburgh, against ; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

AFRICA (No. 5, 1899).

Copy presented,—of Report on the Uganda Railway by Sir Guildford Molesworth, K.C.I.E., dated 28th March, 1899, with six maps [by Command] ; to lie upon the Table.

VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS CLOSED, &c., 1897.

Return presented,—relative thereto [ordered 20th February ; Mr. Bartley] ; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 234.]

WATER ORDERS CONFIRMATION BILL.

Copy ordered, “of Memorandum stating the nature of the Proposals contained in the Provisional Orders included in the Water Orders Confirmation Bill.”—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Copy presented accordingly ; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 235.]

COUNTY COURT OFFICERS IN IRELAND (CLERICAL ASSISTANCE).

Return ordered, “showing (1) the allowances for clerical assistance payable to County Court Officers in Ireland on the 1st day of April, 1897, and at the present time ; and (2) the arrangements adopted for vouching the expenditure for such clerical assistance within the limit of the fixed allowances.”—(*Mr. Hanbury.*)

QUESTIONS.

ANTICOSTI.

MR. HOGAN (Tipperary, Mid.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether one of Her Majesty's ships on the North American station has been instructed to proceed to the Island of Anticosti ; and whether her captain has been commissioned to inquire into recent occurrences on that island.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (MR. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): Nothing is known at the Admiralty of any such action as is suggested in the hon. Member's question.

IRELAND AND TRAINING CRUISERS.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether it is the intention of the Government to send a training ship or cruiser to Tarbert Harbour, in county Kerry ; whether ships have not been stationed at Tarbert several times during late years ; and why is not the same practice now continued, seeing that Tarbert Harbour is one of the safest anchorages in the West of Ireland.

MR. GOSCHEN: My answer to the first question of the hon. Member is, "Not at present." My answer to the second is in the affirmative. With regard to the third question, the answer is that other arrangements have appeared more expedient in the interests of the Service.

NEW POLICE BARRACKS AT KEYHAM YARD, PLYMOUTH.

MR. WOODS (Essex, Walthamstow): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, in connection with the building of the new police barracks now in course of erection in the Keyham Yard, Plymouth, the wages are only being paid at the rate of 4s. per day, or 24s. per week; whether the work was tendered for by local contractors who were willing to pay the rate of wages current in the district, which is equal to 5s. 10d. per day; and whether the rates now being paid are consistent with the Fair Wages Resolution of February, 1891; and, if not, will he cause an inquiry into the circumstances of this case with a view of putting the matter right.

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): It is not clear what classes of workmen the question refers. The several kinds of workmen employed on the work are paid at the usual Dock-yard rates.

COLONEL MITCHELL.

MR. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War will he explain under what circumstances a letter has been officially sent by Mr. T. W. Cave from the War Office to Mr. Frank Osbaldeston, solicitor, of Chancery Lane, in reply to a communication to that gentleman respecting certain money alleged to be due to his client, Colonel E. Mitchell, Royal Engineers, retired, arising out of his service of 31½ years in the Army and retirement, stating that it has been found absolutely necessary to put a stop to further correspondence with Colonel Mitchell, and that the Secretary of State for War regrets that he must decline to enter into any discussion on the subject; and whether he has any objection to state who Mr. T. W. Cave is, and what is his official position, and under what order or regulation he officially conveys the directions of the Secretary of State for War.

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS, Birmingham, Bordesley): The letter referred to was written in accordance with the instructions of the Secretary of State for War by the Deputy Accountant General.

CORK MILITARY CANTEN.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office, with reference to the contract for supplies of provisions, etc., to the Cork Military District recently given to the Canteen and Mess Co-operative Society, Limited, whether he is aware that, in reply to a question upon a similar subject asked on 2nd April, 1895, the late Secretary of State for War expressed the opinion that the soundest system was to permit canteen committees to manage their own affairs in these matters, and said he should view with regret any change which might tend to alter the relations between the troops and the tradespeople in their neighbourhood; and whether, under these circumstances, the War Office will reconsider their decision and decline to sanction this new departure.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: The hon. Member, in quoting the opinion of the late Secretary of State for War on the management of contracts for canteen supplies, has omitted to state that he at the same time expressed his complete satisfaction with the action taken by the General Officer Commanding the Cork District. As I stated to the hon. Member yesterday, it is not proposed to interfere with his responsibility.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that on the occasion in question there was no such thing as a contract?

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: I was not aware of it. I do not know to what occasion the hon. Member refers.

INOCULATION AGAINST DISEASE IN INDIA.

SIR CHARLES CAMERON (Glasgow, Bridgeton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he can lay upon the Table of the House any official Reports on the results of inoculation in India against cholera, typhoid, and the plague.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (LORD G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The hon. Member is aware that a Commission has for some time past been investigating the whole question of the plague in India, including that of the various forms of inoculation. I hope that their Report may shortly be ready for publication; and I should be disposed to await it before presenting any other papers on the subject to which the hon. Member's question refers. I should add that as regards inoculation against typhoid fever no official Reports are as yet available.

MATAAFA.

MR. HOGAN: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Her Majesty's Government has instructed the British representative on the Samoan Commission to veto the candidature of Mataafa; and, if so, upon what grounds.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): The instructions given to the British Commissioner were not such as to bind him to any course of action. The Commissioners will, it is presumed, recommend such action as after full investigation of the facts they find desirable.

SLAVERY IN ZANZIBAR.

MR. J. A. PEASE (Northumberland, Tyneside): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether slave porters engaged in the mainland strip of the Zanzibar Protectorate to go inland can be retained in slavery on their return into the Protectorate; and, if not, whether instructions will be issued to prevent their detention for the future.

*MR. BRODRICK: The legal status of a slave in the mainland strip is not changed by the fact of his having travelled in the interior.

MR. THOMAS BAYLEY (Derbyshire, Chesterfield): Do the Government intend to change the legal status on the mainland?

No answer was given.

OLD AGE INSURANCE IN GERMANY.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for

Foreign Affairs if he will lay upon the Table of the House a translation of the Invalid and Old Age Insurance Bill which was read the third time at the sitting of the German Reichstag on the 15th June, along with a statement explanatory of the changes it will make in the system previously established.

*MR. BRODRICK: The Bill in question has not yet been received, but Her Majesty's Embassy at Berlin has been requested to send home a translation of it with explanatory notes for publication.

THE VENEZUELAN BOUNDARY ARBITRATION.

*SIR H. MEYSEY-THOMPSON (Stafford, Handsworth): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can state if the Commissioners appointed by the various countries in the Venezuelan case have commenced their sittings; and, if so, has he any information to give the House.

*MR. BRODRICK: The Arbitration Commission for the delimitation of the boundary between Venezuela and British Guiana have reassembled in Paris, and held their first meeting on the 15th inst. It has been decided that the proceedings of the Commission will be generally public, and the public will be admitted by cards of admission delivered by the Secretary. Reports of the proceedings will, no doubt, appear in the public Press, but official publications will, as usual, be deferred till the conclusion of the arbitration.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): What is the meaning of the phrase "generally public"?

No answer was given.

CHINESE RIOTS AT KIEN-YANG.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Government have received any confirmation of the telegram reporting the murder by Chinese rioters of the missionaries the Rev. H. S. Phillips, Mrs. Phillips, and a lady friend, during their attempted escape from Kien-yang.

*MR. BRODRICK: No, Sir. According to a telegram from Her Majesty's Consul at Foochow, received on the 17th instant, there was a riot at Kienning on the 15th instant, when property of the Mission was

burnt and two Chinese converts were killed, but it was hoped that all foreigners were safe. Information reached the Church Missionary Society yesterday to the effect that the missionaries were safe.

WEST AFRICAN SPIRIT DUTIES.

MR. CHARLES M'ARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the sanction of Her Majesty's Government has been given to the notifications issued 1st May, 1899, by the Government of Lagos and other West African possessions of the Crown that any increase in the duties on spirits imported into those possessions on or after 1st March last and not *bona fide* sold before the date of the commencement of the law imposing a higher rate of duty will be liable to duty at such higher rate; whether these notifications apply to the increased duties recently imposed; whether goods on which the original duty had been paid, and which had been deposited in the warehouses of British merchants but not sold prior to the promulgation of the increase are to be liable to the further duty; whether the increase will be chargeable in respect of goods which had been cleared at the Custom House and placed in the hands of native traders for sale prior to the imposition of the new duty; and whether it will be chargeable in respect of goods which were sold or contracted for, but not delivered, prior to the imposition of the new duty.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): The notification in question was issued by my direction; but it has been superseded by the action subsequently taken with my approval in Lagos and the Niger Coast Protectorate. In Lagos the duty was raised to 3s. a gallon on 13th May, and this rate will only be levied on spirits imported on and after that date. In the Niger Coast Protectorate the duty of 3s. a gallon was to be charged from 16th June on spirits imported or in stock, but I have not yet received the full text of the notice which has been issued, and am therefore unable to state precisely how it will be charged.

MR. CHARLES M'ARTHUR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, having regard to the recent increase in the duties on spirits imported into certain West African

Colonies, and to the disadvantage attaching to differential tariffs in British possessions closely contiguous, arrangements have been made to assimilate the tariff of the Niger territories to that of Lagos and the Niger Coast Protectorate as from 17th June.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Yes. I am informed that the duty on spirits in the Niger Company's territories has been raised to 3s. per gallon, as in Lagos and the Niger Coast Protectorate.

THE PACIFIC CABLE.

MR. HOGAN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is now in a position to announce a mutually satisfactory agreement between Her Majesty's Government and the Governments of Canada and Australasia in reference to the construction of the Pacific Cable.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: No, Sir. The question is still under consideration.

AUSTRALASIAN FEDERATION.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether it is the fact that the New South Wales Parliament has passed a resolution in favour of federation.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: My hon. friend means the New South Wales Constituent Assembly, I think?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: Yes.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I am glad to say that I have received a telegram from the Prime Minister of New South Wales saying that the vote in favour of federation has been passed by a great majority.

TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN, ENGINEERING DEGREE.

MR. LECKY (Dublin University): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury why the Civil Service Commissioners ignore the Engineering Degree of Trinity College, Dublin, which implies a thorough training in surveying and drawing, as a sufficient qualification for leave to compete for posts under the Land Commission or for county surveyorships; and whether he will request the said Commissioners to specify the points in which they consider that degree to be defective.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HANBURY, Preston): The Civil Service Commissioners do not ignore the Trinity College degree. They consider, however, that it is an insufficient qualification unless it is supplemented by practical experience in responsible professional work.

ARDAGH CATHEDRAL.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he can state what, if any, action was taken by the Ancient Monuments Committee at their meeting on 4th April, 1898, as regards the preservation of the ruins of the ancient Cathedral of St. Patrick, at Ardagh; whether he is aware that the Church Representative Body are standing in the way of vesting this old ruin in the Board of Works; and whether, as the graveyard in which it is situate is now closed by sealed order, any action will be taken by the latter body.

Mr. HANBURY: The answer to the first question is that no action was taken. The Church Representative Body are precluded from vesting the ruin without the consent of the local Church authority. The Board of Works have no power to initiate any action.

WASTE LANDS IN THE ISLAND OF LEWIS.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the Secretary for Scotland is aware that on the 15th April, 1898, resolutions were unanimously carried at a meeting of crofters and others of the townships of Shader, Sheshader, Aird, and Portnaguran, in the Island of Lewis, to the effect that there is ample land contiguous to those townships not suitable for grazing, but which if cultivated would afford sustenance for the numerous fishermen and cottars in these districts; is he aware that for several months in the year fishermen in the Island of Lewis find it absolutely impossible to obtain a sale for their fish on account of the fish curers not being purchasers; and will he, with a view to assist these men in providing for their families during that part of the year when they cannot prosecute their calling as fishermen with profit, consider the expediency of making such arrangements as will enable each family to acquire two acres of these waste lands.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. G. MURRAY, Buteshire): I informed the hon. Member on the 26th April last that the Congested Districts Board had received these resolutions. They were considered along with a similar communication from the Stornoway Landward Committee, and the decision of the Congested Districts Board is recorded on page 14 of the appendix to their first report. I am informed by the Fishery Board that no complaints have reached them as to lack of fish buyers in the Highlands.

SCOTTISH FISHING INDUSTRY.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate, having regard to the fact that the Irish Congested Districts Board make arrangements for the purchase of large quantities of fish from fishermen in the congested area, will the Congested Districts Board for Scotland consider the expediency of making similar arrangements for the purchase of fish in the remote parts of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland during those months of the year when the fish curers are not buyers.

*Mr. A. G. MURRAY: The conditions under which the fishing industry has been carried out in Scotland for upwards of a century are so different from what has recently been attempted in Ireland that there can be no useful comparison where the circumstances are so widely different. I am informed by the Fishery Board that no complaints have reached the fishery authorities in Scotland of lack of fish buyers in the Highlands; and that a considerable number of such buyers are men residing permanently in the locality.

SCOTTISH CONGESTED DISTRICTS.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if the Secretary for Scotland has this year received applications from districts outside the congested area to be defined as congested districts; and will he state the names of any new districts which have now been added to the congested area.

*Mr. A. G. MURRAY: I am informed by the Congested Districts Board that they have had no opportunity this year of adding to the congested area. About half a dozen letters of inquiry have been received, but in no case has the information asked for been supplied yet.

SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether it has been brought to his notice that the proposed gallery across the quadrangle known as Museum Square, in the South Kensington Museum, will greatly detract from the architectural beauty of the buildings; and whether, before proceeding further with the proposed alteration, he will consult with other authorities upon architecture as to the effect which this gallery would have upon the general appearance of this quadrangle.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. AKERS DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): It is not intended to proceed with this gallery at once, and I shall be guided ultimately in regard to its construction by the advice of the committee of architects who are assisting me on the designs.

CASE OF COLONEL MITCHELL.

MR. HAYDEN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he has any objection to lay upon the Table of the House, and cause the same to be printed and circulated to Members, two petitions of right, dated respectively the 5th November, 1888, and the 22nd November, 1894, presented by Colonel E. Mitchell, retired, through the Home Secretary to the Queen, humbly praying to be paid certain money which he alleges to be due in connection with his service of 31½ years in the Army and retirement; whether Her Majesty was pleased to issue her Royal fiat on the first-named petition, and whether the second petition was kept back from Her Majesty the Queen; and whether such a course is in accordance with the Petition of Right Act of July, 1860.

***THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT** (SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): The petition presented by Colonel E. Mitchell, and dated 5th November, 1888, was laid before the Queen, who issued Her Royal fiat; and the matter was tried before the Queen's Bench Division of the High Court, and decided against the petitioner. The petition dated the 22nd November, 1894, was stated by the petitioner to be almost identical with another petition dated the 10th July, 1890, which had been laid before the Queen. In accordance with

the usual practice that repeated petitions on the same subject are not laid before the Queen—a practice not, in my opinion, at variance with the Petition of Right Act of 1860—the 1894 petition was returned to Colonel Mitchell. I cannot, therefore, undertake to lay this petition on the Table; but, if it be thought necessary, I do not think that there would be any objection to laying on the Table the petition of 1888.

CARMARTHEN CHARITIES.

MR. LLOYD MORGAN (Carmarthen, W.): I beg to ask the hon. Member representing the Charity Commissioners whether any steps have been taken by the Commissioners to secure the proper administration of the James Yalden Nevill Charity for the benefit of the poor of the parish of Llanedi, in the county of Carmarthen; whether the Commissioners will take the necessary steps to see that in future a full and complete statement of the accounts of the charity shall be annually submitted by the trustee of the charity to the Parish Council; and whether the Commissioners will take a similar course with regard to the Nevill Charity for the benefit of the poor of the parish of Llangennech, in the county of Carnarvon.

THE PARLIAMENTARY CHARITY COMMISSIONER (MR. J. G. LAWSON, York N.R., Thirsk): No steps have yet been taken by the Commissioners to secure the proper administration of Nevill's Charity for the poor of Llanedi, the mode of administration, which seems to be irregular, having been but recently brought to the knowledge of the Commissioners. The Commissioners will take immediate steps to secure that the accounts shall be properly kept and duly presented to the Parish Meeting, and a similar course will be taken in the case of Nevill's Charity for the poor of Llangennech.

MR. LLOYD MORGAN: I beg to ask the hon. Member representing the Charity Commissioners whether the Commissioners have under their consideration any scheme for dealing with the accumulations under the Cicely Morris Charity for the benefit of the poor of the parish of Llandisilio, in the county of Carmarthen; and whether the part of the said charity which is to be applied for the

education of the children of the poor of the parish will be administered irrespective of the religious creed of the parents of the children.

MR. J. G. LAWSON: No application has been made to the Commissioners for dealing by a scheme with the accumulations referred to, amounting to £42 3s. 4d., at the date of the inquiry held by the Assistant Commissioner. They will be prepared to entertain such an application, if made to them. The Commissioners will take the necessary steps to secure that the part of the charity applicable to the children of the poor of the parish is administered in future in accordance with the trusts.

GUN LICENCES IN IRELAND.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): On behalf of the hon. Member for the St. Patrick Division of Dublin, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland will he explain why veterinary inspectors employed by the local authorities in Ireland, and acting under the orders and powers of the Veterinary Department of the Privy Council Office, Dublin Castle, when using guns for the destruction of animals suffering from rabies or other diseases, are compelled to take out licences as required by the Gun Licence Act of 1870, whereas water bailiffs, who are the private employees of local boards of conservators, are exempted by the Commissioners of Inland Revenue from taking out the 10s. licences imposed by the Act; and whether he will consider the expediency of exempting the veterinary inspectors from paying the licence duty when acting in the execution of their duty.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. G. W. BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): I have very little information as to the use of guns by veterinary inspectors, though I believe these inspectors have on rare occasions used a gun for the purpose mentioned in the question. Animals suffering from rabies are, in nearly all cases, destroyed by the police; and swine condemned for swine fever are, as a general rule, killed by butchers. The Board of Inland Revenue, upon representations made by the Irish Government some years ago, consented to exempt from payment of duty all water bailiffs who carried guns in the execution of their duty and for self-protection. It

does not appear that any sufficient reason exists for extending a similar exemption to veterinary inspectors; but if the hon. Member will name particular cases in which an inspector has been called upon to take out a licence for using a gun for the destruction of animals suffering from disease, inquiry will be made into the matter.

FAIR RENT APPLICATIONS IN NORTH KERRY.

MR. FLAVIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that great public inconvenience has been caused to a large number of tenants in North Kerry by the fact that the Sub-Commission have not sat at Listowel to hear fair rent applications for nearly two years; whether tenants in the Listowel district, whose applications to fix fair rents were made nearly three years ago in some instances, are still unheard; what is the number of tenants' applications now awaiting trial at Listowel; and whether some steps can be taken to remedy this congested condition of the Land Court cases.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: A list containing a large number of cases from the locality of Listowel, as well as cases from other districts in the County Kerry, was commenced at Killarney early last month, and is now in course of disposal. That list contains all cases from the districts listed in which applications to fix fair rents were lodged in the Land Commission prior to the 1st February, 1898. There are ninety cases from that portion of the Listowel Union situate in County Kerry, and twenty-two from that portion in County Limerick still unlisted.

IRISH BAILIFFS AND FIREARMS.

MR. FLAVIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that it was sworn at the Sneem Petty Sessions Court a short time ago that James Cahillane, who is a bailiff or emergency man residing at Lomanagh, near Sneem, in the County of Kerry, threatened to use firearms on one of Her Majesty's subjects; whether Cahillane has a gun licence, and does his licence permit him to keep and carry firearms; and what action will be taken by the authorities.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: I am informed that there is no foundation whatever for

the statement in the first paragraph. The individual referred to has a licence to carry a revolver.

LOUGH ERNE DRAINAGE CHARGES.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland how much the excluded charges in the case of the County of Cavan amounted to by reason of the Lough Erne drainage charges; and if the Cavan County Council has been furnished with the full particulars of these excluded charges.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: The amount taken as raised for "excluded charges" in the County Cavan by reason of the Lough Erne drainage charges in the standard year is £64. I am not aware whether the County Council has been furnished with the particulars of the excluded charges in this county.

RUINS OF TARA.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that an English antiquarian proceeded to dig up the most ancient portion of the ruins of Tara; whether he had any authority to do so; and whether steps will be taken to prevent such action in future.

MR. HANBURY: The excavation of one of the mounds was suggested by an English gentleman, who, I understand, is interested in searching for the Ark of the Covenant, and the work was actually begun by the owner of the property. The Board of Works (in whom the guardianship of these mounds is vested) had given no authority for the excavation, and on learning that it was contemplated they took immediate steps to warn the owner of its illegality. He abandoned the work at once, and the mound has now been restored to its former condition. The Board of Works are thoroughly alive to the interest felt in the remains of Tara, and they will not consent to anything which would interfere with the structure or appearance of the mounds as they stand. Nor will they permit any examination of them, however harmless, without the fullest consideration and conference with the two principal antiquarian societies of Ireland.

MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): Will the right hon. Gentleman give us the name of the antiquarian who

is searching for the Ark of the Covenant?

MR. HANBURY: No, Sir.

IRISH LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTS.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the form of accounts for county councils and district councils; whether, in keeping one set of accounts, *i.e.*, the rates account, the clerk of the county council has to enter up for every ratepayer in the county twenty-two columns across the ledger; and whether, as this form of account keeping will mean an immense increase in the staff required to keep the accounts of the county, he will consider the advisability of immediately recalling this order and issuing a simpler form.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: The reply to the first paragraph is in the affirmative. With reference to the second paragraph, it is estimated that not more than one-half the columns will require to be filled as regards each rating, and each name will only have to be entered once in each half-year. It is difficult to see how the account could be simplified consistently with the provisions of the Local Government Act and the Orders in Council, but if any county council can suggest some simpler plan which will serve the purpose equally the Local Government Board will be prepared to consider it.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: Why could not the old system have been kept in force?

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: Because it was not consistent with the Act.

EDGEWORTHSTOWN LOAN FUND SOCIETY.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Edgeworthstown, County Longford, Loan Fund Society collapsed in consequence of the dishonesty of an official; whether it has been brought to his notice that its accounts were duly vouched by the auditor of the Loan Fund Board at a time of hopeless insolvency and mismanagement, and that many widows and poor persons have lost all their savings by becoming debenture-holders; and whether, having

regard to the general lack of care taken by the Dublin Castle Board in looking after this society, the Government will introduce a short Bill to enable these poor debenture-holders to be compensated for their loss.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: The hon. Member will find the question fully replied to in an answer given by me to the hon. Member for East Cork on the 23rd February, 1897.

DISTRESS IN THE KILLARNEY UNION.

MR. FLAVIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a resolution unanimously adopted by the Guardians of the Killarney Union, urging on the Congested Districts Board to open relief works in the Coom division of the Killarney Union; whether distress and want of employment prevails in Coom division to a large extent; and whether the Congested Districts Board will be asked to open up useful works in the division.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: The resolution referred to has been received. The Guardians have been informed that the Congested Districts Board have no power to expend their funds on the opening of relief works. As regards the second paragraph, the Local Government Board inspector has frequently visited this Union during the past few months, and no reports have reached him of the existence of exceptional distress in any part of the Union. The inspector will again visit the district of Coom at an early date.

MR. FLAVIN: Has the inspector specially reported on his visit to Coom?

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: No report has been received as to this special district.

THE LAKES OF KILLARNEY.

MR. FLAVIN: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he is aware that the public bodies of Kerry, including the Kerry County Council, have unanimously passed resolutions calling on the Government to purchase as a national park the Herbert Estate now offered for sale; whether he is aware that a general expression of opinion prevails throughout the United Kingdom that Killarney ought

to be saved from falling into the hands of private individuals, who may possibly altogether close up the grounds or further restrict the few privileges which tourists enjoy in their visit to Killarney; and whether Her Majesty's Government could find some means of buying and preserving for the benefit of the public this attractive estate.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (MR. A. J. BALFOUR Manchester, E.): I cannot add much to what I said yesterday in answer to a question from another hon. Gentleman on the same subject. I believe it is the fact that the County Council of Kerry has passed a resolution in the terms suggested by the question, but I have no evidence that there is a general feeling throughout the United Kingdom that public money ought to be spent in obtaining this public park in Killarney, and there must be obvious objections to the expenditure of public money for such purposes at a place very far distant from any centres of population, and which, from the nature of the case, is not of much value to tourists during many months of the year.

MR. FLAVIN: Is there not some fund out of which a grant could be made to the County Council so that this place may be reserved for the general public; can nothing be obtained from the Financial Relations Committee?

No answer was given.

PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 7:—

Amendment proposed—

"In page 4, line 31, to leave out all the words from the beginning of the clause to the word 'after,' in line 32."—(Mr. Thomas Shaw.)

Question again, proposed "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): I understand the object of my hon. and learned friend the Member for the

Border Burghs, who moved this Amendment, is to raise the question whether after a local inquiry has been held on a Private Bill, the Bill should be referred again to an inquiry before a Departmental Committee. I would suggest to my hon. and learned friend that the form of the Amendment is somewhat inconvenient, and I doubt whether this clause is the proper place in which to raise the question. I think very great inconvenience would follow the acceptance of the Amendment. My hon. and learned friend proposes to leave out all the words at the beginning of the clause, but this is the very first place in the Bill where power is given to the Secretary for Scotland to do anything, and if my hon. and learned friend succeeds in his Amendment the result will be that the Secretary for Scotland will be precluded from doing anything at all until after a local inquiry. I think, therefore, that my hon. and learned friend would be well advised to withdraw his Amendment at this stage, and raise the question on Clause 9, which deals with the reference of Bills to a Joint Committee. There is also another reason why I would venture to suggest that this course should be taken. If we take a Division on the Amendment it will no doubt be rejected, and the result will be that the words in question will stand part of the clause. Now the words at the beginning of the clause require a great deal, I will not say of discussion, but of explanation. It seems to me that Clause 7 as it stands is unintelligible. "If there is no opposition to the Order," "the Secretary for Scotland may forthwith make the Order as prayed"; but if you turn to Clause 8 you find that that clause contemplates a case in which there is no opposition also, but an inquiry has been held, in which event a certain course of procedure is to be followed. It appears to me that Clause 7 should begin without mentioning absolutely that qualification, and then proceed as in Clause 8 to deal with the case where there is no opposition to the Order, but where inquiry took place. There should be inserted some such phrases as "And if no inquiry has been held"; then the course which the right hon. the Lord Advocate suggested will be followed, and if an inquiry has been held then the other course is to be followed. The real antithesis is not between opposed and unopposed Bills, but between Bills on

which a local inquiry has been held and those on which there has been no local inquiry. I suggest to the hon. and learned Member for the Border Burghs to withdraw his Amendment, and to raise it again on Clause 9. As I am dealing with the words that are in question now, I would also draw the attention of the Lord Advocate to the meaning of the word "forthwith," when it is considered in connection with the words which precede. I suppose it applies to cases in which the opposition has been withdrawn; then the Scotch Secretary may make the Order as contemplated. But in the case in which there is no opposition I do not know whether the word "forthwith" is seriously meant to be "at once," without giving time for opposition subsequently to arise. Then, again, there is another phrase which really will have to be carefully considered, and that is "either before or after inquiry has been held as hereinbefore provided." That is a case in which there has been opposition and the opposition has been withdrawn, or where the withdrawal has been made before or after the inquiry. I take it that that is what it must mean; but I think that it ought to be made more clear. And if that is what it does mean, a subsequent question will arise as to what the intention of Parliament really is on that part of the Bill. Assuming that to be the proper meaning of the clause, I would like to ask whether it is the intention of the Government, when there has been opposition, and when there has been inquiry, and possibly a Report, and that opposition has been withdrawn after the inquiry and Report, that the Secretary for Scotland should ignore altogether the inquiry and the Report, and proceed to make forthwith the Order as prayed. Although the clause contemplates that the withdrawal may take place after there has been inquiry before the Commissioners, and conceivably after the Commissioners have made their Report, it seems to me that four or five serious cases of misinterpretation may arise on these lines. If my hon. and learned friend were to persevere with his Amendment, he might preclude us, at this stage of the Bill, from considering the points I have raised. On that ground, and on the ground that he has chosen the wrong field on which to raise the question he wants to settle, and that he had better raise it on Clause 9, I venture to hope that he will withdraw his Amendment

now, and allow us to take the discussion as to the meaning of the words of Clause 7.

MR. THOMAS SHAW (Border Burghs): I am very anxious to facilitate any proceedings under this Bill. I must say that the right hon. and learned the Lord Advocate last night met me in a spirit which I thought would facilitate the discussion. He took my first Amendment, which is part of a scheme which I have set up before the House, and, so taking it, I thought that we should discuss at this stage the general scheme, which is, Should there be a Parliamentary inquiry in Scotland, and also on the back of that a Parliamentary inquiry in London? I do not propose to withdraw my Amendment, but I propose to go on with the discussion on it, and to accept loyally the decision that may be taken upon it, and that decision will not be met by me in any spirit of obstruction. I wish, if I may be allowed, to make a direct appeal to the Leader of the House on this subject. I may explain that the position of the Amendments which I have placed on the Paper is this. We have now secured by the concession granted by the Government that the tribunal which will hold these inquiries shall sit locally. In accordance with the views so clearly expressed by the Leader of the House yesterday, both Houses of Parliament, by their Joint Committee, are to visit the spot affected by the Bill and there make their inquiry. If that is so, my idea is that the Bill will be upset as to all the advantages of cheapness and promptitude if you re-duplicate another Parliamentary proceeding in England. I may say that I appeal to the Leader of the House, because what I am now doing is completely confirmed by what the Government did in a former part of the Unionist régime. In the session of 1892 the right hon. Gentleman himself introduced a Bill in the House of Commons, which certainly did not set up a Parliamentary inquiry on the spot, but what was clearly what I may call an extra-Parliamentary inquiry for the information of Parliament. But the right hon. Gentleman's scheme in that Bill was so completely in accord with my Amendment that one of the sections of the Bill was to the effect that if the preamble were proved before the Grand Committee, then the Bill was sent to a Third Reading in this House,

and not to a Select Committee. That is exactly what I want to achieve by the present Amendment. I find that that was the settled policy of the Government of that day, because under the Act of 1891 there were clauses applicable to subsequent procedure in Parliament, and one of these clauses was in this form that, whatever happened, and whatever was to be done after the report of the local inquiry, the parties should not be entitled to refer the Bill to a Select Committee. I only say that to confirm the view, which I hope is shared on both sides of the House, that the value of this Bill will be largely dissipated if, while you save expense by taking Parliament to Scotland, much more expense will be heaped up again by bringing the local persons to Westminster. I regret that I cannot agree to the withdrawal of the Amendment, for that, I am afraid, would be to waste the time of the Committee, but I shall loyally accept the decision of the Committee upon it.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): The understanding in Scotland has certainly been that the local inquiry was to come in substitution of an inquiry in London, whereas, from the statement made last night by the right hon. and learned the Lord Advocate, it now appears that in certain circumstances there is to be a local inquiry plus a Parliamentary inquiry in London. If this is really the intention of the Government, I think that they will be very much disappointed with the reception of their proposal. There has been in many quarters a distinct recognition of the merits of local inquiry, and it was certainly with the idea that it was to be one inquiry. Whereas, if you have first of all the expense and trouble connected with an inquiry on the spot, with witnesses called and so forth, and if, after all, that has to be gone over again in London, it will not answer the purpose for which it was understood this Bill was framed. The idea has always been that this change was to bring about simplicity and cheapness, but instead of that we shall have complication and increased expenditure. The Lord Advocate contended that it was necessary to do this in order to secure Parliamentary control, but under the scheme shadowed last night there will be abundant Parliamentary control. The new Committee is to be constituted of

Mr. Edmund Robertson.

Members of the two Houses of Parliament, and when their Report is framed it is to come on at what may be called the Report stage for confirmation by the House. What more Parliamentary control is needed? If I were an opponent of this measure I should certainly welcome the course which the Government has taken, because I am satisfied that it will quite reverse the idea in Scotland of the purpose of this Bill. In place of its being popular, it will become an unpopular measure when the municipalities and all those interested in the matter find that, instead of having a single inquiry and a single Report, we are to have this double procedure. I appeal to the Lord Advocate and the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government, if they wish this Bill to be appreciated in Scotland, that they should abandon altogether the idea of a second inquiry in London after there has been an inquiry in Scotland.

MR. THORBURN (Peebles and Selkirk): The second inquiry will practically vitiate all benefits of the Bill, and if the object of the Amendment is to prevent a second inquiry I shall certainly vote for it.

MR. RENSHAW (Renfrew, W.): Following the remarks which the hon. Member for Dundee made to the Committee just now, I should like to point out that this is not a surprise to those who have been following this Bill. The hon. Member for Dundee rather seems to think that this matter was sprung upon us last night by a statement by the First Lord. That is not the case. I am perfectly certain that very loud objections would have been heard in many parts of Scotland if it had not been that a provision of this kind had been inserted. Because, after all, what would be the position of people who would come to the House under the clause we are now considering? I understand that we are considering the whole of this case under the Amendment, and any Division which is taken upon this Amendment practically decides the whole matter. The position is this. There will be a local inquiry, when the parties interested will have an opportunity of being heard. If, after that inquiry, people in the locality discover that they are going to be affected in a way in which they did not believe they were going to be affected at the

time of the application for the Provisional Order, then, unless another inquiry is possible, there will be no opportunity of being heard or of making their objection effective. I do hope that the Government will express their intention of adhering to the provision of this measure, as it has been before the House and before the country for so long a time. It is a matter of the greatest anxiety to those who are interested whether so vital a change in the Bill is going to be made.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I do not wish to express a final opinion as to the right course to be taken until we have heard the opinion of the Government further on the matter. But there are two points which strike me as being worthy of consideration. One is, and I say this with deference to the remarks of the hon. Member for Renfrew, that the whole system of the Bill has been entirely changed by the introduction of a provision that the first inquiry shall be held by a Committee consisting of Members of the two Houses. That meets the difficulty which was felt in the first instance by the Government when they framed the Bill, of removing the control of Parliament. The control of Parliament is now absolute, and therefore in that respect the Bill is entirely different from what it was originally. There is, therefore, I think, a *prima facie* case for the consideration of this Amendment by the Government. The second remark which occurs to me is this. Under Clause 9 it will be a matter of course that a Bill on being referred back to the House by the Secretary for Scotland will automatically go before the Joint Committee. Is it necessary that the inquiry before that body should be an automatic one? Should it not rather be for those who desire another inquiry to make their case out for such a course, and that a special order of the House or some authority should be necessary before that further inquiry takes place?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. G. MURRAY, Buteshire): This matter, so far from being a new departure, which the hon. Member for Dundee seems to think, is really one of the topics that have been most discussed. I should be sorry to say how many speeches I have made on this Bill, but in those speeches, and not only in the speeches on this Bill, but on other

Bills, I have again and again been confronted with the question of Parliamentary control. Unless I am a very bad judge of the general feeling of the House, I think this Amendment is a complete *volte face* on the question. I quite understand that the constitution of the Committee of Inquiry has been changed, and now commands the confidence of hon. Members in a way in which the original proposal did not, but we must reflect that in every form of Parliamentary inquiry hitherto known an opportunity has always been given to an opponent to have an appeal on the merits. For instance, in the case of a Private Bill, after an inquiry in the one House the opponent can always renew the inquiry in the other House. Moreover, so careful is Parliament in the matter of Provisional Orders that we give the possibility not of two but of three inquiries. Accepting all the confidence placed by hon. Members in the tribunal which has been now constituted, surely four Members of Parliament going down to Scotland are not necessarily much wiser than if they had stayed in Westminster, and accordingly it would be a very strong step to take away from an opponent, who must be deeply interested, this appeal upon the merits. Therefore, both on the merits of the case and because I cannot go back on what I look upon as my pledges to the great body of the House, I am not able to accept the Amendment.

DR. CLARK (Caithness): I am very much amused at the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, because I remember that the present Lord Justice Clerk, when he was Lord Advocate, laid it down in a Bill which we discussed for several weeks that it was the most important point in the measure that there should be no appeal from the local tribunal. What the Lord Advocate then fought for was that the Commissioners should have an inquiry, but that if there was an appeal and the matter again came before Parliament, that it should be referred back again to the same Commission upon special points. If, after the inquiry had been made, it could be shown that something had been overlooked, then the Commission would again report to the House. But both Houses in the clauses of that Bill were absolutely prevented from appointing a Select Committee or from doing anything else than referring it back again to the Commis-

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sioners. There are two strong arguments against having a double inquiry. The first is that it is what everyone has been trying for many years past to get remedied and reformed, and the Committee of 1888 and everybody interested in this question have always been in favour of a Joint Committee inquiry, which is partly judicial and partly legislative. One of the good things in this Bill we have always agreed is that there would be a Joint Committee of both Houses, and that both Houses would be compelled to receive their Report. You have taken away the Chairmen and the Secretary for Scotland, so that the opponent will have an absolute right to come to Parliament. You will have had all the local costs, and you will have the second costs here. Everyone in this House who is acquainted with the matter knows that the reason why, in 1846, 1847, and 1848, the local inquiries were unsatisfactory and Parliament had to repeal the Act giving local inquiries was because those who held the inquiries were not persons who ought to decide questions of this sort. In this Joint Committee of Lords and Commons there is everything that we desire, and if the decision were appealed against it would only be an appeal to the same class of persons. The second argument is that it may be difficult to get Members of both Houses to go down to Scotland, and it would be much more difficult if some other gentlemen could easily be appealed to afterwards to undo the work. You would not find Members of either House eager to go and do this work if what they did was to be set aside in this manner. It is a novelty, and I hope the First Lord of the Treasury will support what on a former occasion he considered the best plan. Now that we have got the kind of Commissioners we have always considered would be the best for the purpose, I hope the Bill will be passed in this form, because it will then be a very good Bill. But I am afraid, with these double costs and double appeals, instead of being useful and effecting the reforms we expect it to do, it will be very prejudicial and very costly.

MR. HOBHOUSE (Somersetshire, East): I consider that the present Amendment carries out the objects of the promoters of this Bill, because I always understood that its object was to simplify and render less costly and more convenient the procedure

in regard to Private Bill legislation in certain parts of the United Kingdom. The Lord Advocate's speech really seemed to be not in defence of the Bill, but in defence of the present system. He spoke of the necessity of there always being an appeal on the merits, and he instanced the present system of hearing the same case twice over by Committees of the two Houses. That is a point upon which I thought everybody was agreed—that it would be desirable in most cases, at all events, to substitute one Joint Committee for two separate Committees. I am afraid that the critical nature of this question is hardly appreciated. The Government have made very large and important changes in their Bill, the most important no doubt being the creation of what is practically a tribunal of the two Houses sitting locally in all sorts of places in Scotland. What is to follow? According to the Government's own plan, if a Bill reported and passed by this local Parliamentary tribunal is unopposed, the control of this House is to be maintained by passing this Order through the Report and Third Reading stages, and on either of those occasions there will be an opportunity for amending or rejecting the provisions of the Order. That is considered necessary in the case of unopposed Bills. Surely that is sufficient protection for preserving the Parliamentary control—which we all value—in the case of opposed Bills, considering that these opposed Bills have been sifted—and, we are entitled to assume, carefully sifted—by a Committee composed of Members of each House. It has been suggested that we ought to follow the analogy of the Provisional Order system. But Provisional Orders in the first instance are not made by Joint Committees; they are made by an official of a public Department sent down to make a local inquiry, and it is eminently necessary in such cases that there should be Parliamentary control. But the case is not analogous. The Government have already conceded the full Parliamentary tribunal, and there can no longer be any shadow of excuse in the matter of these gas and water inquiries for having an appeal from the local Committee to what is evidently a similar tribunal in London. If the Government insist upon this, they will make the Bill quite useless for the purpose for which it was intended. It will no longer provide a simpler and less costly pro-

cedure; it will become a dead letter, and the object which the great majority of the House has at heart—that of reforming this procedure and making it more convenient for localities—will be entirely defeated.

MR. SOUTTAR (Dumfriesshire): I desire to say a word or two on this question; first, because it is a very important point; secondly, because the Lord Advocate has been so conciliatory with regard to many points; and thirdly, because I think we are going to get a very good Bill for Scotland, and it is a pity that it should be spoilt. The alterations that have been made have made us believe that we are going to get a fine, good-working measure. If the Lord Advocate would accept this Amendment it would be entirely in accordance with all that he has been saying and doing with regard to the Bill—not as it originally stood, but as it now stands. When we were discussing the question of making it optional to promoters to apply for either Provisional Order or Private Bill as they might feel inclined, he very strongly impressed upon the House the necessity for making it compulsory; because, he said, it would be entirely to the advantage of the rich suitor as against the poor one if it were otherwise. Now he is neutralising that action, because he knows perfectly well that the only man who can appeal to London and have a second inquiry is the rich man. The appeal to the House of Lords to-day is the privilege of the rich man, and it will be exactly the same with regard to this. The Lord Advocate also said once or twice that it is a great protection that the appellant may be mulcted in costs. But that, again, is entirely to the advantage of the rich man, because the rich man does not care what the costs may be. The second reason why I think this Amendment would be entirely in accordance with the Bill as now amended arises from this fact. We were all agreed that it was exceedingly desirable that there should be some means of Parliamentary control—first, because we were doubtful about the tribunal, and, secondly, because we did not want to put too much power in the hands of the Secretary for Scotland. The tribunal is now all right. Just as the courts of law move through the country, Parliament is going to move through the country, and we have great confidence that

the tribunal, as the Lord Advocate has now established it, will be exceedingly satisfactory. Parliamentary control is also all right. A provision has been inserted which gives Parliament the right in connection with every measure to have the final word. Therefore there is no reason, as far as I can see, why control should be heaped upon control, and expense heaped upon expense; and if there is no reason for it, there is every reason against it. The first is the expense. There is not the slightest doubt that, unless this or some other Amendment like it is accepted, the expense will be increased to such an extent as to endanger the action of this otherwise excellent Bill. The second reason is the lack of responsibility which there will be upon the Committee, because the Members will feel that the case will, after all, be tried in London; and just as a grand jury always argue that it is not worth going into the question, because the common jury will go into it thoroughly, so the members of the Committee will argue that, as the case is going up to London, they need not inquire very carefully into its merits. Nor could it be at all for the dignity of the Committee that there decisions should be reversed. I do trust that the Lord Advocate will act with regard to this as he has acted with regard to so many matters, and will take away this blot from that which I believe is going to be a very excellent Scotch Bill.

MR. CRIPPS (Gloucester, Stroud): Undoubtedly this Amendment, if accepted, will alter the whole framework of the Bill, both as regards suitors and as regards the control of this House. May I remind the Committee of what the alteration is? As the Bill originally stood you were to select your local tribunal or panel, partly of Members of Parliament and partly appointed from outside. What is your position? You still select your members from the panel, but you are merely giving preference to the Members of both Houses of Parliament. If they refuse to serve it will be exactly the same tribunal as before. I am as anxious as anyone to have simplification and economy, but it would be a very great mistake to have the simplicity and economy at the expense of justice. The number of appeals is infinitesimal after local inquiry has been held; but it is only right when an appeal does come up that justice should

be done and the case be properly heard. There is another argument to which I should like to draw attention. Of course there will be a question as to whether the procedure will be based on Private Bill procedure. I apprehend that the considerable factor in the question will be the nature and character of the Bill. If it is so constituted that you have this right of appeal I think there would be a very much stronger argument for this procedure than if there were no right of appeal at all. Therefore in the interests of this measure we ought to put it on the justest possible basis. There is not one change in the form of the Bill which would justify a clause of this kind. I think if hon. Gentlemen had been in this House yesterday they would know that what the Lord Advocate said was true, that this Amendment would upset the basis of the Bill.

*MR. A. G. MURRAY: I only want to say one word in answer to the hon. Member for Leith. The Committee will no doubt be surprised to hear that from the year 1888 to 1897 inclusive there were 1,973 Provisional Orders confirmed by the House of Commons. There were only seventy-five of those in which there was opposition, and in only seven cases was that opposition successful. If that is so, and that tribunal was not so good as the one which is now about to be set up, it goes without saying there will be many less appeals.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): If there is so little ground for appeal, then I cannot see the necessity for this machinery. The people first of all wish for local inquiry, and we in this House have stipulated that if there is a local inquiry it shall also be a Parliamentary inquiry in the locality. If it is a Parliamentary inquiry we need not have another Parliamentary inquiry here. So long as it is not a Parliamentary inquiry, and our jealousy and our suspicions of the somewhat singular series of tribunals that have existed for some years is in full flow, we ought to have a chance to appeal to the Parliamentary wisdom of the country. I do not, on the whole, think that there is anything in the point that has been urged. If the matter is to come up again in the form of a Parliamentary Committee you will have great difficulty in getting Members of Parliament to go down on the

Mr. Souttar.

Committee of local inquiry. They will probably say, "Why should we go down to Aberdeen or Inverness, or some other remote corner of the earth in order to do this service to the country when we can do it just as well here?" At the present moment a Member thinks that to go down to Scotland will not only do him good, but that he can do public service at the

same time. Do not let us destroy the work of our hands by setting up a tribunal which is to reverse or supervise what has been done with so much labour on this spot.

Question put.

The Committee divided: Ayes, 206; Noes, 140. (Division List No. 201.)

AYES.

Acland Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Aird, John
Allhusen, A. Henry Eden
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arrol, Sir William
Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. J. Fitzroy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baird, John George Alexander
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (Leeds)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barnes, Frederic Gorell
Barry, Rt. Hn. A. H. S. (Hunts)
Bartley, George C. T.
Barton, Dunbar Plunket
Bathurst, Hn. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Beach, W. W. Bramston (Hants.)
Beckett, Ernest William
Begg, Ferdinand Faithfull
Bhownaggee, Sir M. M.
Blakiston-Houston, John
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bolitho, Thomas Bedford
Bonsor, Henry Cosmo Orme
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Boulnois, Edmund
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, T. G. (King's Lynn)
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, A. Montagu
Bullard, Sir Harry
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt. Hn. J. A. (Glas.)
Carlile, William Walter
Carson, Rt. Hon. Edward
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lances.)
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.)
Chamberlain, J. A. (Worc'r)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Chelsea, Viscount
Clarke, Sir Edward (Plym.)
Cochrane, Hn. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colomb, Sir John Charles R.
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Courtney, Rt. Hon. L. H.
Cranborne, Viscount
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Herb. Shep. (Bolton)
Cruddas, William Donaldson

Curzon, Viscount
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, William Theodore
Drage, Geoffrey
Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn E.
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manr.)
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Fitz Wygram, General Sir F.
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Flower, Ernest
Folkestone, Viscount
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
Fry, Lewis
Galloway William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Godson, Sir Augustus Fred.
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, Hon. John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir J. Eldon
Goschen, Rt. Hn. G. J. (St. George's)
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Halsey, Thomas Frederick
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord G.
Hamond, Sir C. (Newcastle)
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. R. W.
Hatch, Ernest Fredk. Geo.
Heaton, John Henniker
Hoare, Samuel (Norwich)
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Houldsworth, Sir W. Henry
Howard, Joseph
Hozier, Hon. Jas. Henry Cecil
Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn
Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)
Jackson, Rt. Hon. Wm. Lawies
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Jolliffe, Hon. H. George
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir J. H.
Kimber, Henry
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawrence, Sir E. Durn'g. (Cor.)
Lawrence, W. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Llewellyn, Sir Dillywn (Swaz.)

Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. C. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (Liverpool)
Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lubbock, Rt. Hon. Sir John
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Macartney, W. G. E.
Macdonald, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
Manners, Lord Edw. Wm. J.
Maple, Sir John Blundell
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Maxwell, Rt. Hn. Sir Herbert E.
Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
Milbank, Sir Powlett C. John
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monk, Charles James
Morgan, Hn. F. (Monm'ths.)
Morton, A. H. A. (Deftford)
Mount, William George
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. G. (Bute)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Northcote, Hn. Sir H. Stafford
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Pease, Herbt. P. (Darlington)
Pierpoint, Robert
Pollock, Harry Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretzman, Ernest George
Priestley, Sir W. O. (Edin.)
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Renshaw, Charles Bine
Rentoul, James Alexander
Richardson, Sir T. (Hartlep'l)
Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir Matthew W.
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Round, James
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Russell, T. W. (Tyronne)
Rutherford, John
Samuel, H. S. (Limehouse)
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scoble, Sir Andrew Richard
Seton-Karr, Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spencer, Ernest
Stanley, Hon. A. (Ormskirk)
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)

Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
 Stock, James Henry
 Stone, Sir Benjamin
 Strauss, Arthur
 Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
 Sutherland, Sir Thomas
 Tomlinson, W. E. Murray
 Valentia, Viscount
 Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard
 Wanklyn, James Leslie

Warr, Augustus Frederick
 Webster, R. G. (St. Pancras)
 Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
 Whiteley, H. (Ashton-under-L)
 Whitmore, Charles Algernon
 Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
 Williams, Joseph P. (Birm'm)
 Willox, Sir John Archibald
 Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
 Wodehouse, Rt. Hon. E. R. (Bath)

Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
 Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. S.-
 Wyndham, George
 Wyndham-Quin, Maj. W. H.
 Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy
 Young, Commander (Berks, E.)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
 Sir William Walrond and
 Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Allan, William (Gateshead)
 Allen, Wm (Newc. under Lyme)
 Allison, Robert Andrew
 Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herb. Hy.
 Baker, Sir John
 Barlow, John Emmott
 Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
 Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
 Billson, Alfred
 Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
 Bryce, Right Hon. James
 Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
 Burns, John
 Buxton, Sydney Charles
 Caldwell, James
 Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
 Carmichael, Sir T. D. Gibson
 Carvill, Patrick G. Hamilton
 Causton, Richard Knight
 Cawley, Frederick
 Channing, Francis Allston
 Clark, Dr. G. B. (Caithness-sh.)
 Clough, Walter Owen
 Colville, John
 Commins, Andrew
 Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
 Crilly, Daniel
 Crombie, John William
 Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
 Curran, Thomas (Sligo, S.)
 Dalrymple, Sir Charles
 Dalziel, James Henry
 Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan)
 Davitt, Michael
 Denny, Colonel
 Donelan, Captain A.
 Doogan, P. C.
 Duckworth, James
 Dunn, Sir William
 Evershed, Sydney
 Farrell, J. P. (Cavan, W.)
 Fenwick, Charles
 Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
 Flavin, Michael Joseph
 Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
 Gibney, James
 Goddard, Daniel Ford
 Gold, Charles

Gourley, Sir Edw. Temperley
 Hammond, John (Carlow)
 Harwood, George
 Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale
 Hazell, Walter
 Hedderwick, Thos. C. H.
 Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Ch. H.
 Hobbouse, Henry
 Hogan, James Francis
 Horniman, Frederick John
 Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
 Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
 Jacoby, James Alfred
 Johnson-Ferguson, Jabez E.
 Joicey, Sir James
 Jordan, Jeremiah
 Kearley, Hudson E.
 Kinloch, Sir John George Smyth
 Kitson, Sir James
 Langley, Batty
 Lawson, Sir W. (Cumberland)
 Leese, Sir J. F. (Accrington)
 Leng, Sir John
 Leuty, Thomas Richmond
 Lewis, John Herbert
 Lloyd-George, David
 Lough, Thomas
 Lyell, Sir Leonard
 Macaleese, Daniel
 MacDonnell, Dr. MA (Queen's C)
 MacNeill, J. Gordon Swift
 M'Ewan, William
 M'Ghee, Richard
 M'Iver, Sir L. (Edinburgh, W.)
 M'Kenna, Reginald
 M'Killop, James
 Maddison, Fred.
 Mappin, Sir Fredk. Thorpe
 Mendl, Sigismund F.
 Moore, Arthur (Londonderry)
 Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carm'rth'n)
 Morgan, W. Pritchd. (Merthyr)
 Moulton, John Fletcher
 O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
 O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
 O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
 O'Connor, J. (Wicklow, W.)
 Oldroyd, Mark

Palmer, Sir Ch. M. (Durham)
 Palmer, George W. (Reading)
 Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)
 Pilkington, Sir GA (LancsSW)
 Pinkerton, John
 Power, Patrick Joseph
 Price, Robert John
 Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
 Richardson, J. (Durham, S.E.)
 Roberts, J. H. (Denbighs.)
 Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
 Samuel, J. (Stockton on Tees)
 Schwann, Charles E.
 Scott, C. Prestwich (Leigh)
 Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
 Soames, Arthur Wellesley
 Souttar, Robinson
 Spicer, Albert
 Stewart, Sir Mk. J. M. Taggart
 Strachey, Edward
 Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
 Sullivan, T. D. (Donegal, W.)
 Tennant, Harold John
 Thomas, A. (Glamorgan, E.)
 Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen E.)
 Thomas, David Alf. (Merthyr)
 Thornburn, Walter
 Trevelyan, Charles Philips
 Wallace, Robert
 Walton, John Lawson (Leeds, S.)
 Wedderburn, Sir William
 Weir, James Galloway
 Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
 Williams, John Carvell (Notts)
 Wills, Sir William Henry
 Wilson, Chas. Henry (Hull)
 Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
 Wilson, John (Falkirk)
 Wilson, John (Govan)
 Woodhall, William
 Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Hud'rsfd)
 Woods, Samuel
 Wylie, Alexander
 Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
 Mr. Herbert Gladstone and
 Mr. Munro Ferguson.

*MR. A. G. MURRAY: The Amend-
 ment which stands in my name is in
 furtherance of my promise to hon. Mem-
 bers, and it is practically the Amendment
 of the hon. Member for Mid-Lanark with
 certain alterations, which according to the
 best authorities of the House ought to be
 made. The object of the hon. Member
 was to give Parliamentary control in the

case of unopposed Orders, and to prevent
 there being any Committee stage here,
 and enable the Bill after introduction to
 at once pass to the Consideration stage.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 5, line 10, to leave out sub-section
 (2), and insert—'(2) No order so made shall be
 of any validity unless it has been confirmed by

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.

Parliament; and the Secretary for Scotland shall, as soon as conveniently may be, submit such order to Parliament in a Bill (hereinafter referred to as a Confirmation Bill), and such Bill, after introduction, shall be deemed to have passed through all its stages up to and including Committee, and shall be ordered to be considered in either House as if reported from a Committee. When such Bill has been read a third time in the first House of Parliament the like proceedings shall, subject to Standing Orders, be taken in the second House of Parliament. Any Act passed to confirm such Order shall be deemed to be a public Act of Parliament."—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

Amendment agreed to.

Other Amendments made.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 8 :—

Amendments made.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 9 :—

MR. CRIPPS : The Amendment standing in my name is, I think, an important one, because of the procedure in Parliament, and I should like to call the attention of the Lord Advocate to the Act of 1888, because the words that I propose to insert are taken from that Act verbatim. This House will recollect that the scheme of that Bill was that first of all there should be an inquiry before the Board of Trade, and that after that there should be a joint inquiry of both Houses. The intention from the outset was that there should be a Joint Committee, but it was not put as a statutory obligation upon this House or the House of Lords that they were to appoint a Joint Committee. That has never been done. What has been done is that the matter has been left for either House to deal with under the Standing Orders. I think that it would be an unfortunate thing if we were to allow the procedure in the House of Commons or the House of Lords to be decided in this way by Statute instead of by way of Standing Orders. My submission is that a Bill passed through this House ought to be subject to our Standing Order procedure, and under these circumstances I beg to move the Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 6, line 24, to leave out from 'shall,' to end of sub-section, and insert 'so far as it relates to the matter petitioned against, be

referred to a Select Committee, or, if the two Houses of Parliament think fit so to order, to a Joint Committee of such Houses, and the petitioner shall be allowed to appear and oppose, as in the case of a Private Bill.'"—(*Mr. Cripps.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

*MR. A. G. MURRAY : I think I have already, in the course of the discussion, given practically the answer to the argument of my hon. friend, and his logic does not carry the matter much further. If he is right, it is quite obvious that we can never have private legislation by Bill at all, because private legislation is subject to the Standing Orders of this House. We wish to alter that, and if we cannot put into an Act of Parliament, and if we do not put into the Bill, something which curtails the procedure of the House under the Standing Orders, we cannot have the Bill at all. Surely in these days that is necessary if you wish to make a real reform in this case. If we accept the suggestion of my hon. and learned friend there can be no certainty with regard to its effect, for each year the procedure may be altered by the Standing Orders either of one House or the other.

MR. BRYCE : The hon. Member for Stroud, as has been pointed out by the Lord Advocate, is not consistent with the Amendment which he moves. He must feel that it is impossible for him to give effect to his object by this Bill. I support the contention of the Lord Advocate.

*SIR F. S. POWELL (Wigan) : I think it is a great departure from sound principles that the procedure of this House should in any way be controlled by the statute law. I think it is a derogation from the dignity attaching to proceedings in Parliament. The Lord Advocate says that it is necessary to adopt his words in order to carry his intentions; but I do not think it is necessary, and my hon. and learned friend has showed us the way of escaping that. If that is done the freedom of Parliament will remain unimpaired. That appears to me to be a strong argument in favour of the Amendment, because under it we shall be able to alter our Standing Orders. Those Standing Orders have been changed from time to time with great benefit to the carrying on of our proceed-

ings, and also with great benefit to the community. Therefore I think that argument tells in favour of the Amendment, and not against it. I sincerely regret the action of the Government in this matter. They do not explain what is to be this procedure in regard to the cost, or by what means the House of Commons and House of Lords will have control under this provision.

DR. CLARK: Every Bill has a clause of this kind in it, and this is a most important precedent, for we have always desired to hold in our own hands the control of the money. Now this Government has brought in a Bill by which the whole matter has been entirely changed. In several Bills which have been passed this session the financial control has passed away from this House entirely.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: This is a matter in which I should like to see a change, and if I had the opportunity I should make an attempt to alter this system. I want to put one point to the Lord Advocate. Admittedly, this is an experimental Bill, and it may be highly desirable to leave liberty of action to this House, and to follow the method of procedure by Standing Orders. It might be found desirable and of the greatest possible advantage to do the very thing which the second sub-section of this clause prohibits being done and which is made unlawful. This would be swept away by the consequential Amendments which come after. It does seem to me to be most highly desirable that this House should not part with its powers of dealing with financial matters under exceptional forms of legislation. Of course, to my mind, the first sub-section is, to a considerable extent, guarded, because it is provided that it shall be subject to the Standing Orders, but the obnoxious words are those which provide that it shall not be lawful to refer a Confirmation Bill to a Select Committee. I think it is a very undesirable thing to say that it shall not be lawful for Parliament to do a thing which it is very desirable that Parliament should do. It is a very dangerous thing to infringe the power of Parliament by varying the Standing Orders. When you have found that a Standing Order is incomplete or impossible to be fulfilled, or desirable for any reason to be altered,

Sir F. S. Powell.

you have the power to alter it; but if you pass a cast-iron Act of Parliament, and make it unlawful to refer a Confirmation Bill to a Select Committee, then I think you are setting up a very dangerous principle, and you are practically tying the hands of Parliament. My hon. and learned friend would put an end to this by his Amendment. I do not say at all that we should never in any degree alter the practice, but we should leave it open to Parliament to follow the old practice, and I think it is extremely desirable to leave it in the power of Parliament to do that.

MR. CRIPPS: What we are dealing with here is the procedure in Parliament itself. The point is, Are we to have these statutory regulations or be governed by our Standing Orders when Bills are passing through this House? I want it to be clearly understood that the reason why I raise this point is not that I desire to alter the substance of the Bill. Why should we go against constitutional precedents? It is all very well to say that this is only one particular instance, but if you once start by going against constitutional precedents you may find them heaped up against you in many ways. We do not want to put our procedure in antagonism to statutory procedure, for that would be most unfortunate. The right hon. gentleman said that another Joseph may arise.

*MR. A. G. MURRAY: No, I said that another king may arise.

MR. CRIPPS: Why should we lose the power of control which we ought to have, and of which, of all others, we should not be deprived? It is quite clear that if we sought in this House to do something which was inconsistent with statutory regulations we could be restrained in some form or another. The exact form may be difficult to explain, but we should be restrained because there would be a larger power than ourselves. Do not let us be led away by these false analogies, because what we are dealing with here is not subject to procedure in Parliament. The question is, Are we to give up our control in regard to procedure while these matters are before the House? I consider that that is an extremely important constitutional point. I do not think

there is any substance in my hon. friend's objection. I think it is a mistake to bring about a change of this kind, and surely it is a mistake to interfere with our constitutional privileges, and I hope we shall not be led away with the idea that the precedent which will be established is not a large one.

MR. CALDWELL: There is also another question, and it is that this House has the constitutional right to regulate its own procedure with regard to the Bills passing through this House. If we desire to bind the other House as well as this House we can only do it by Statute.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

MR. RENSHAW: The Amendment which I have to propose is one which I think will save a great deal of expense.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 6, line 24, after 'referred, to' insert 'together with the evidence taken before the Commissioners.'"—(Mr. Renshaw.)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*MR. A. G. MURRAY: I think anyone who has had any experience of judicial work will recognise that there is really nothing so difficult as for an untrained person to come to a determination upon evidence not laid before himself, but before another body. Without the slightest disrespect to Parliamentary Committees, which are well fitted to get a general view of what passes before them, I do think that they have not that specific training which is necessary in dealing with matters of this kind.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Question proposed, "That Clause 9, as amended, stand part of the Bill."

MR. THOMAS SHAW: Upon this question I do not propose to take any Division, and I intend to carry out the undertaking I gave upon a former occasion. I would like, however, to say just one word, and that is, that as regards Clauses 8 and 9 of this Bill I think no one can read them without seeing how very complex and extremely expensive

the whole procedure will become under the Bill. The second matter to which I wish to draw attention is that I hope Her Majesty's Government will read the Division list upon the Amendment which I submitted to the House, because I think a perusal of that list will show that substantially the opinion of Scotland is united in desiring that there shall be no double inquiry as provided by this measure. That is my concluding observation, and in the interest of the progress of the Bill itself, in view of the Report stage, I hope the Government may be able to make some arrangement under which any opposition to the Bill may be at last taken out of the way by a concession which will satisfy not only Scotch opinion as a whole, but even the opinion of other parts of the country which was represented so powerfully in the last Division list.

Question put, and agreed to.

Clauses 10 and 11 agreed to.

Clause 12:—

MR. RENSHAW: I think the Committee will appreciate the importance of having such an adviser as the referee or the legal assessor, and I think it is extremely desirous that whether it consists of Parliament or the members of the Council they should have the benefit of legal advice when it is necessary.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 7, line 29, after 'such,' to insert 'legal assessors.'"—(Mr. Renshaw.)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*MR. A. G. MURRAY: I do not think that the Bill will be strengthened by this Amendment. Assessors may contribute too little or contribute too much, and in the latter case they would have a deal of power and no responsibility, and in that dilemma you get better results without legal assessors at all.

Question put, and negatived.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 13 agreed to.

Clause 14:—

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs): I think before this clause is added to the

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Bill we ought to congratulate the Government on the great step they have taken in the direction indicated by the clause. As I understand it every Member of Parliament who has to go down to Scotland to discharge these duties will get his travelling expenses and subsistence allowance. It is a very short step now to payment of Members, and I think the Government are to be congratulated on their action.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 15 :—

DR. CLARK : I understand the Government themselves intend to modify the clause before the Report stage.

MR. A. G. MURRAY : I intend to make sundry changes before the Report stage, and if the hon. Member wishes I will take out Sub-section 2.

*SIR JOHN LENG : The Amendment which stands in my name was placed on the Paper for the purpose of bringing before the Committee the question of fees. Continual complaint is made in connection with Private Bill legislation, more particularly in the case of unopposed Bills, that the House fees are excessive. The Committee which considered this Bill stated in their Report that the amount of the fees of the two Houses in 1888 was on an average about £60,000, while the expenditure on Private Bill business was from £15,000 to £20,000. The fees paid in 1897 amounted to £54,176, while the expenses were only £21,680, leaving a profit of £32,496. The Committee strongly recommended that those responsible for the fixing of the fees should materially reduce them.

THE CHAIRMAN : I do not think the question of fees can be raised on this Bill. The question of dealing with fees applicable to Private Bills has no relation to the discussion in this clause, which deals with fees for Provisional Orders.

SIR JOHN LENG : The Amendment provides for fees for Provisional Orders.

THE CHAIRMAN : If the hon. Member looks at the Amendment, he will see it contains the words, "Bills and."

Mr. Dalziel.

SIR JOHN LENG : Then I will omit these words, and move the rest of the Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 8, line 9, after 'Provisional Orders,' to insert, 'provided that such scale of fees shall be framed with regard to the expenses actually incurred under this Act in connection therewith.'"—(Sir John Leng.)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*MR. A. G. MURRAY : It is certainly our intention to provide a scale of fees under the Act which shall be self-supporting, but everything of that sort must be done with the consent of the Treasury. Obviously it would be quite out of place in this Bill to give directions as to what the fees of the House should be. The hon. Member may therefore be content with what I tell him is our intention, but I should not like to be hampered by the actual words of the Amendment.

SIR JOHN LENG : The Amendment is an indication to the Treasury as to what should be done in framing the scale of fees. I have brought this question two or three times before the House, and I have always found the greatest difficulty in finding out who imposed the fees, and my questions have been evaded one way or another. At the same time I am quite willing to accept the assurance of the right hon. Gentleman, but I for one will continue to hammer away at this question until I have made some impression on the Treasury. I do not think the country is aware that so great a profit is made out of Private Bill legislation.

DR. CLARK : The probability is that this Bill will compel the reform which my hon. friend desires, because the Chairmen and the Secretary for Scotland will only fix such fees as will be necessary to cover the cost, and it would of course be ridiculous to allow Scotchmen to get Private Bills in this cheap fashion while Englishmen, Welshmen, and Irishmen are subjected to the present tax. Justice demands that what is done for Scotland should also be done for England, Ireland, and Wales. We in this House charge a certain rate, whereas the House of Lords charges so much per cent., and I think

that both Houses should have a uniform rate.

Question put, and negatived.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 16 :—

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR (Forfar) : I would ask the right hon. Gentleman how the two systems will work side by side—the system established by this Bill and the present Provisional Order system. As I understand it, the latter system is to go on precisely as at present ; but, on the other hand, the first clause of the Bill states that when any public authority or persons desire to obtain Parliamentary powers they shall proceed by presenting a petition to the Secretary for Scotland.

*MR. A. G. MURRAY : The hon. Member is quite right, with one little correction. It is felt that in certain cases it would be rash to take away, for instance, the jurisdiction of the Board of Trade, which has worked well for years, and the power of the Board as to Provisional Orders will remain as at present.

DR. CLARK : Why should not local authorities be able to get under this Act power for electric lighting ? They can go to the Secretary for Scotland for a water Bill, or a gas Bill, or a tramway Bill, and get it by this cheap method. Why not a Bill for electric lighting also ? If a local authority wants electric lighting it runs the risk of having three fights : one before the local inspector, another in this House, and a third in another place. I do not want to take away the power of the Board of Trade, but it is necessary to have a uniform practice. Why should Glasgow and other corporations, if they want electric lighting, be compelled to go to the Board of Trade, and instead of one inquiry, or at most two, have three inquiries ?

*MR. A. G. MURRAY : In the matter of electricity, so much has Parliament felt that the jurisdiction of the Board of Trade should not be taken away, that a regulation has been laid down preventing electrical undertakings being promoted as Private Bills, and therefore the power of dealing with them must remain

with my right hon. friend the President of the Board of Trade.

CAPT. SINCLAIR : It is much to be regretted that there is no method of ascertaining roughly the total expenditure of an application under this Bill, or any means of comparing it with the expenditure incurred before the Light Railway Commissioners. It would also be a great advantage if we could compare the costs under this Act with the costs under the present Provisional Order system.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 17 :—

*MR. A. G. MURRAY : I move to omit in page 9, line 19, from "person" to "entitled." This will allow Parliamentary solicitors to appear at the inquiries, even though admitted after the Act is passed. That is perfectly fair.

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 17, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 18 :—

MR. DALZIEL : I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman when it is intended that the Act should come into force.

*MR. A. G. MURRAY : At the end of the session of Parliament next year. There will be a great many matters to arrange, and the procedure is very intricate.

Clause agreed to.

MR. BRYCE : I beg to move the clause standing in my name. It is taken from the Light Railways Act, 1896.

New Clause :—

" If any objection to any draft Order is made to the Secretary for Scotland, or to the Chairmen, on the ground that the undertaking proposed to be authorised by the Order will destroy or injure any building or other object of historical interest, or will injuriously affect any natural scenery, the Chairmen shall consider such objection, and may either report to the Secretary for Scotland that such objection raises an issue or issues which ought to be dealt with by Private Bill and not by Provisional Order, or may refer such objection to the Commissioners, who shall give to those

by whom it is made a proper opportunity of being heard in support of it."—(*Mr. Bryce.*)

brought up, and read the first time.

***MR. A. G. MURRAY:** I will accept the clause if the right hon. Gentleman takes out the words "to the Secretary for Scotland, or."

MR. BRYCE: I am willing to do so.

Clause as amended, agreed to, and added to the Bill.

Bill reported; as amended, to be considered upon Monday next, and to be printed. [No. 244.]

ELECTRIC LIGHTING (CLAUSES) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. BRYCE: I think this is a Bill which the House will agree in considering a very useful measure and one which is likely to be of considerable convenience. It enables certain clauses to be incorporated bodily in order to save the necessity of being added separately to each Provisional Order. That is a desirable object, and I do not think the provisions of the Bill substantially alter the existing law. There is no novelty included in it, but it enables what is done now to be done more conveniently.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (MR. RITCHIE, Croydon): The right hon. Gentleman has correctly described the Bill. There is nothing new in the Bill, but it will conduce to a great saving of time and expense.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read the second time, and committed for To-morrow.

TELEGRAPHS (TELEPHONIC COMMUNICATION, &c.) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. HANBURY, Pres-

ton): The time that has elapsed since I introduced this Bill—a delay for which I am myself personally responsible—has had one result. It has shown complete unanimity on one point, viz., that the present system cannot possibly go on. There has not been a single resolution from a local authority, a memorial from a trading association, or, that I have seen, one single article in the newspapers supporting the existing system. The House will have noticed that the company itself has introduced Bills, which makes it as plain as possible that without fresh powers the present system cannot go on, and I am sure that the House is not prepared to grant fresh powers to a company, already with very large powers beyond those afforded to any other company, and which is absolutely uncontrolled. On that point even the City of Liverpool, which to a certain extent is opposing this Bill, is absolutely agreed, and the City Council has, I understand, requested the Members for the City to oppose any extension of the powers of the company, and a resolution has been unanimously passed by the Association of Municipal Corporations to the same effect. And surely there is every reason for a step of that kind being taken, because the figures with regard to the state of the telephonic communication in this country are positively alarming. I will compare England with other countries. In Switzerland there is one telephone in use for every 100 of the population, and in Norway one for every 144; in Sweden one for every 147; in the United States one for every 132. And I notice in all these cases there is practically no State system, but one which is worked by local bodies or general competition. Taking the principal countries where there is State control and no competition, in Germany there is only one telephone for every 149 inhabitants, in France 1 for every 432, in Austria 1 for every 640. England, even as compared with Germany, is very far behind; for in this country we have only one telephone for every 636 of the population. I pass from the countries themselves to the principal towns, and I find that in Stockholm, where there are actually three systems in competition with one another—which is a considerable argument against those who say competition is impossible in this matter—the

number of telephone users is greater than in any other town—1 in every 14 of the population. In Geneva the number is 1 in every 23; Berne, 1 in every 27; San Francisco, 1 in 27; Hamburg, 1 in 56; Berlin, 1 in 82; Vienna, 1 in 132; and London, 1 in 433.

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.): Where did the right hon. Gentleman get these figures?

MR. HANBURY: I got the figures from the chief electrician of the Post Office, and they were made up to date only yesterday. But it is not necessary to go beyond our own country for examples. The National Telephone Company has had a service established in Jersey for seven or eight years. The population of Jersey is 54,000, and I am informed that there are 80 users of the telephone, or 1 in 650 of the population. But when we come to Guernsey, which is one of the places where the Post Office has granted licences to the local authority, the number of users, instead of 1 in 650, as in Jersey, is 1 in 84, although the system was only started about two years ago; and the number of subscribers is growing rapidly every day. I think, therefore, that the first essay in the direction of municipal telephones has not been very unsatisfactory. I want to say frankly in regard to the National Telephone Company that it has undoubtedly done good work, and a great deal to encourage the use of the telephone in this country; and I should be the last one not to recognise the service it has rendered in this regard. I will go further, and say that I would be very sorry, wherever the National Telephone Company has got way-leaves, and can give an efficient service, serving all alike on equal terms, and can give the public a certain service, to see that service discontinued. But it surely is a very proper request to make that the service should be efficient, certain, and that all should be served alike on equal terms. But the evidence given before the Select Committee tells a very different story. Now, what is the position at the present moment? It is one partly due to the fault of the National Telephone Company,

but also to a considerable extent not to the fault of the company. What we want in this country is a general service which will extend itself over the whole country; but the National Telephone Company picked out the most densely populated parts of the country, and you could not blame them for that. Being a private company they naturally consulted their own interests. We have been told by the chairman of the company that they would not extend their service beyond 1904, and that it could not be expected that a private company should extend telephones over the whole kingdom. Even if they could, I maintain we ought not to allow a private company to have a monopoly of this kind; for we want not only a general service, but an efficient service. I will do the National Telephone Company the justice to say that wherever they do get the opportunity they give a physically effective service—that is to say, where they can get underground way-leaves and a double circuit system. But there are a large number of municipalities who will not give these underground way-leaves, who say, "We will not allow our streets to be taken up by any private company." Surely that is a very reasonable ground for the municipalities to take up, since they desire to have control over their own streets; and Parliament will never force the municipalities to grant these way-leaves. Bill after Bill has been brought into Parliament to compel the granting of the way-leaves, and the municipalities of the country with one voice have been opposed to them, and Parliament has invariably refused them. I say, therefore, that in these towns the National Company cannot give an efficient service. But it does not follow because the company cannot get way-leaves that the people of this country are to go without an efficient telephonic service, which is so important to trade and commerce. Again, we want a public service—a service that will be offered to all alike; we want a popular service which shall not be limited to a particular class of subscribers only; but, above all, we want a certain service not depending on way-leaves. Five-sixths of the present way-leaves granted to the National Company could be terminated, by those who granted them, within six or 12 months from the present day; and it cannot be permitted that a national ser-

vice should exist on such a precarious footing as that. Well, of course, these things being so, and these being the requirements, a good many persons have jumped to the conclusion, on the analogy of the Post Office and Telegraph Service, that State telephones would be the only solution of the difficulty. It is not surprising that the ingenious and ingenuous directors of the company should back up those people in that view; for if the idea succeeds it means paying an enormous price to the company for their undertaking; and, on the other hand, if it merely delays the contemplated reforms, to a certain extent their interest would be served. I am bound to say that there is one other thing that impresses me very much as to the necessity of regulating, at any rate, a monopoly like this. The indirect influence which a big company like this can bring to bear, and is bringing to bear, is enormous; and it is difficult to say where public policy begins and private interest ends, when all kinds of preferences and trusteeships can be put into men's hands. I say, this constitutes one of the greatest arguments against such an enormous monopoly as this, which has such direct and indirect power. Well, is nationalisation the only solution of the difficulty, or is there any other practical remedy? I fully admit that one control is necessary, and that the control of the whole of the telephonic service must be in the hands of the State. That is necessary for uniformity, and under this Bill, for the first time, we shall be able to get that uniformity. We shall be able, in dealing with the municipalities and new licensees, to be able to insist, as we cannot do with the National Company, on that uniformity; and also, when we come to deal with the trunk lines, we shall be able to resist the imposition of terminals, which we cannot insist on in the case of the National Company. I believe that for national efficiency the State should have complete control, and that we should do the work on the trunk lines; but why should we, in addition to supervising, undertake work which can be just as well done by the local people on the spot? Something like 98 per cent. of the whole messages in the exchanges never leave the locality, never come on the trunk wires at all; and that is essentially work which there is no necessity for the State to undertake. I have been told that that

state of things is temporary and peculiar to England. But there is even a higher percentage than that in every country in Europe and America. The only place where that percentage is not exceeded is Switzerland, but, of course, that country is very small. Then, our trunk lines are the best and cheapest in Europe; and in addition, hitherto the service has practically been a monopoly of the larger traders, who are naturally the people who use the trunk wires. Then, I am told that if the exchanges are in different hands the communications between the exchanges will be more difficult. Well, I consulted the engineer of the Post Office particularly on the point, and he said it was a complete delusion; that the same switching would have to take place whether the exchanges were in the hands of companies or the Government. If that be so, and if there are no practical or technical advantages in State management, I ask, Why should we incur a great risk and an enormous and unnecessary increase in the staff of the Post Office, and the corresponding increase in wages? The staff of the Post Office is already 160,000 strong. The Postmaster-General is, I believe, already the greatest employer of labour in the world, and the staff is growing year by year. The staff of the Telephone Company is already 10,000, but, judging by the figures I have given and the extent to which we are lamentably behind other countries, the new staff ought to be increased by 10,000 or 20,000 more. Therefore it is not only the increase to the staff that we would have to look to, but the increase in the wages. It came out very clearly in evidence before the Select Committee, of which I was Chairman, that the wages of the company's operatives are excessively low. We found that out from experience, also, when we took over the operators on the trunk wires, and we had to raise their wages by over 40 per cent. We should have to do the same thing if we took over this enormous additional staff, besides providing for pensions and promotion. More than that, the telephone operators would endeavour to put themselves on the same footing as the telegraphists, and we know that the wages of the telegraphists are enormously above those of the telephonists, and yet the former are not satisfied with their conditions of service. After all, what does this cry for nationali-

sation of the telephones mean? It means immediate purchase, a certain burden thrown on the Post Office, and great disturbance of trade. It means purchase, at accommodation price, of a monopoly which ought never to have been allowed to grow up. It means that we would have to buy, as a going concern, a monopoly which will fall into our laps in 1911. While I am most anxious to treat the National Company with absolute fairness, I think that to ask us to buy up the monopoly as a going concern is to ask far too much. But what else does it mean if we are going to buy the company up? It means buying up a great deal of good work, as at Liverpool and Nottingham, I admit. The Town Clerk of Nottingham says that in that city "the telephonic communication is as nearly perfect as it can be made"; while in Liverpool they say that, whatever complaints have been made elsewhere, they were getting there a very excellent service. But in those places where the work is so good why should we unnecessarily replace it? We might leave the company to continue to do what it has hitherto done efficiently. What I object to is, that in order to buy up the good we should be compelled to buy up the bad also. Why should we have to buy up 25 per cent. of the company's system, which consists of single wires, which 10 years ago we decided that no other company should be allowed to put up? Why should we buy 25 per cent. of wires which we ourselves would never be allowed to use? Take again the overhead wires. The company's system in London consists practically of overhead wires, and the same may be said of a large number of provincial towns; and overhead wires are absolutely of no use to the State. We have no rights over overhead wires beyond that of ordinary citizens; but we have powers for underground wires, and we would always use these in preference, partly because we have these rights, and partly because the underground wires give a more efficient service. Why should we buy up wires, then, from which we could get no benefit, the tenure of which is precarious, and which do not give an efficient service? I am bound to say that, in addition to that, these wires are of very poor material, such as the State will not allow other companies to use. Moreover, a great number of these wires are called dead wires, which belong to

subscribers who have ceased to exist, and are of no use. Then there are a large number of private wires between men's houses and their places of business, which are outside the scope of State operations altogether, and if we were to buy them there is nothing to prevent the National Telephone Company competing with us for such wires to-morrow. Mr. Gale estimated that these private wires were worth £400,000 to £500,000. Again, there are places, like Liverpool, where the original overhead wires have been taken down, and underground wires laid at a cost of £150,000. Is the State to pay the expense of the first setting up of the wires in Liverpool, and then replacing them at a cost of £150,000? And that is going on in many other large provincial towns. Again, why should we buy up watered capital to the tune of a million and a quarter? It may be said we are not asked to buy all this up; but I maintain we are, because in the scheme started by Mr. Ray, of Liverpool, and embodied in pamphlets which have been so industriously circulated by the National Telephone Company, that is exactly what he proposes. It is one of the wildest schemes ever put forward by a business man. He suggests that we should buy up everything I have mentioned; and, in the next place, that we should give a million and a quarter beyond the market price; and that we should pledge our credit in order to buy up the undertaking at that price. Then he assumes that we have not only to buy it at this enormous price, but that it would repay us well to do so, because, forsooth, we are to make no deductions in the present charges, which are to remain as they are. He further assumes that the expense of working the system will be, under the State, something the same as under the company. I have already shown that the rise in wages alone would be at least 40 per cent. Well, if the taxpayers' money is to be spent, I would like to get value for it; and I should like, in the next place, to see it expended in acquiring a new and serviceable plant—not in replacing or supplementing the company's system, and more especially as we are so much below the level of other countries. I do not think nationalisation is a feasible project. Now, what is the next suggestion? It is that made by the President of the Council of Associated Stockbrokers—and the stockbrokers have

taken a very prominent part in this question, I do not know why. They say, "We believe that either the Government should assume sole control or enable those at present working the telephones to obtain full power to develop the same, subject, of course, to control." Well, I have already explained that that could not be done in places where the National Company have no way-leaves, and these are the very places where we want the service extended. Parliament would never allow these municipalities to be compelled to grant the way-leaves to a private company; and when it is suggested that the Post Office should go through the form of calling the company its agent and then use its own powers over the heads of the municipalities in order to give the company the way-leaves, that is an absurdity. Having shown the practical impossibility of a State system, and having shown that the National Company could, under no circumstances, supply places where there are no proper way-leaves, we are thrown back on only two other sources of supply. The one is the local authorities, which I propose should not be merely limited to municipalities of 50,000 inhabitants, but should include the sanitary district authorities. The effect of this would be to cover the greater part, almost every part, of the country, and it would also allow local companies to be introduced, if they could get way-leaves from the authorities. I think it is quite possible that while a corporation may be unwilling to grant way-leaves to a rich and powerful company, they might be willing to grant them to small local companies over which they would have more control. What would be the effect of that? In the first place, both the corporations themselves and the small companies would be new licensees, and we would be able to impose conditions on them, which, unfortunately, we are not able to impose on the National Company; we should guard against preferences or against a refusal of the service to all persons alike upon equal terms, and we should require that it should be a popular service. Of course, it must be clear that we should be able to extend the service all over the country, and the question of way-leaves would fall to the ground, because the local authorities have their own way-leaves, and if they do not choose to work the service themselves they can give it and

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their way-leaves to a local company. In fact, by this means, I believe we would give as good a service as the State could possibly give, and in some respects, in regard to these way-leaves, a better service. Because I believe that there might be a good deal of friction with the municipalities if the State went into the streets and broke them up under their undoubted powers. In fact, there have been complaints already where the State has done that. Thus it would be a great advantage if the Government could supplement the service in a great number of areas. More than that, it might have the result of wakening up the National Company to give a better service where the municipality or other local companies could compete; because both municipalities and the local capitalists would say to the National Company, "If you do not give us a better service, we will devise a system of our own." I am one of the first to object that it is not sufficient that this service should be efficient, but we must also require that it should be thoroughly fair to the company; and from first to last I have endeavoured to act in strict fairness to the company, because I do admit that they have done great and useful work. What is the position of these two proposed alterations with regard to the company? It has been admitted from the first that there is no unfairness in starting against the National Company—that will be admitted by my right hon. friend. It has never been a question that it was perfectly fair to start new companies in opposition. Then comes the question of municipalities, and the company no doubt did raise very grave objections to the municipalities, because the Government in this Bill have recognised that to a certain extent the granting of licences to municipalities does place them in a different position to companies, because the whole constituency of a Corporation has a direct interest in encouraging it. We have tried to balance the advantages and disadvantages, and we have made this offer to the company and have embodied it in a Treasury Minute. First of all, when fair competition is brought into play, we will purchase in 1911 all the existing plant of the company which is fit and suitable for the work. We shall not decide the point of suitability—that will have to be decided by an independent expert. Considering

that in 1911 we are under no obligation to buy any of the company's plant, I think that is a very fair and large offer. In addition to that, where the National Telephone Company is absolutely free from control, we are going to impose certain stringent conditions on the municipalities which we cannot impose on the National Telephone Company. We have also made a further offer, that if they will at the limit of their extensions connect their exchanges with the extensions of the corporations, we will not only purchase in 1911 all their plant which is not obsolete, but all the future plant they may have erected, and that I consider is a very large offer. If I were a large shareholder in this company—and it applies to the shareholders rather than the directors—I should say, "Are we wise in opposing such an arrangement and opposing this Bill?" I do not think the conditions are likely to change very much in twelve years. The Government now is against nationalisation, and I think the Government twelve years hence will also be against it. If we do not nationalise, these municipal exchanges must go on and have the National Telephones with these conditions. All we want is an efficient service, and it does not matter to us how it is given. It is only where the National Telephone Company cannot or will not give an efficient service that we offer to put these other persons in their place. That, I think, answers the criticisms which were made in a memorial of the Bristol stockbrokers, who the day after the Bill was brought in passed this resolution, that the Government "are attempting improperly to depreciate the value of the share capital so as to prepare for the ultimate purchase of the company's undertaking on confiscatory terms." But we do not want to purchase at all. Nothing would put us in a better position than we already are; and as to any idea of depreciating the value of the shares in order that we may purchase at a low price, that seems to me to be very wide of the mark when we need not purchase at all. What are the objections to this Bill, and who are the objectors? In the first place, the main objectors are the large traders and tradesmen of this country, and it is remarkable with what unanimity, what sameness of language, all these resolutions have been passed; no matter from what part they come, the language is almost

identical. In addition to the resolution of the Bristol stockbrokers, we have those of the various chambers of commerce, who again represent the large traders of the country. But these chambers of commerce are not opposed to this Bill. Only 22 out of 96 oppose it. Why do the large traders object? Because at the present moment they get uncommonly good value for their money for a subscription of £15 in London, and £10 in the provinces; they have an unlimited right to send messages, they monopolise the exchanges. Compare this with the telegraph. Suppose we were to say that nobody should send a message unless he paid £15 a year, and nobody should use the telegraph unless he were a subscriber. Naturally, those in that favoured position would not want to be disturbed. What does the telephone service say with regard to this? Before the Committee the case was pointed out of a man who sent 200 messages a day in return for a subscription of £18, getting £300 worth of messages, calculated at the rate of a penny a call. The National Telephone Company want to make their service a popular one, and we want to also, and it is these very men who are opposing our popular service. Such a state of things exists here as exists in no place abroad. The service ought to be thrown open to the whole country; not only to the large traders, but to the small tradesmen as well. It is perfectly possible to retain the subscription system side by side with the other, and the Post Office has worked it out and finds that a man who sends 3,000 messages a year will be able to get 5,000 for a smaller amount. But the opponents of this Bill have in one respect turned round. They say now that at the present moment the trunk lines are crowded at certain hours of the day, and if more subscribers come forward they will be still more crowded. But we shall meet that objection by laying a larger number of trunk lines, and if that is done the last objection will be gone. The other opponents we have are a few of the largest towns, and they again are in a minority, as shown by the resolution passed by the Municipal Corporations Association last year—that in the event of the Postmaster-General not taking over the telephone service it should be competent for municipal and other local authorities to undertake such service within areas composed of their own dis-

tricts, or a combination of such districts. All the opposition comes from Liverpool and Nottingham, and it so happens that those two places are exceptionally well off. They have made a very good bargain with the National Telephone Company, and have a good service; but that is no reason why they should stand in the way of smaller corporations not so well able to fight their own battles. What are the real complaints that these men make? Take the Town Clerks of Liverpool and Nottingham. The only objection which the Town Clerk of Nottingham makes is that no other system but a national system could supply a service to the country districts at such a distance. I do not believe that. I believe a company could supply it just as well as the State.

AN HON. MEMBER: Better.

MR. HANBURY: The Town Clerk of Liverpool admitted that he had no objection whatever to municipal enterprise in telephones where there was no service at the present moment, and no competition with the National Telephone Company. But only consider what that area is. Consider where there are telephones and where there are not. According to the Town Clerk of Liverpool those are the places where municipal telephones may clearly start, though he opposes it on the ground of the limited use of the telephone, and that it does not extend to the bulk of the population. It does not do so now, and never will, unless our system comes in. There are a great number of places where there is no competition. But if the toll system were introduced there is no reason whatever why in a great number of our towns there should not be just as large a proportion of telephone users as in Stockholm, or Geneva, or Berlin. Take Guernsey. The information sent to me only a couple of days ago as to Guernsey furnishes a remarkable illustration of what municipal enterprise would do. The States of Guernsey only started the telephone two years ago, and they have already one telephone to every 84 of the population, and a tariff which meets every class of subscriber. They pay £5 13s. 4d. for 4,000 calls, or over five calls for one penny, and £2 10s. for 1,250 calls, and a penny for five calls after. The result is that they are paying interest on their capital, a Government

royalty of 10 per cent., and are also building up a sinking fund. Local authorities are, after all, the best judges of their own interests. They need not start a service if they do not want it or if they think it is not to the interest of their ratepayers, especially now that we are giving them three alternatives after the arrangement with the National Telephone Company. In Stockholm, where there are more telephone users per population than in any place in the world, they have three systems working side by side in opposition to one another. There is the State system and two companies. We have in this country our own Post Office exchanges, but I am bound to say that, owing to Treasury regulations, they are not worked as they ought to be. That I perfectly admit, but even so we have been paying a large interest on the capital; and, although our exchanges are not so flourishing as they might be, they have been giving a handsome return for the expenditure. An intelligent Treasury has now abolished those regulations. It is true that the National Company is, to a certain extent, at a disadvantage in that it did not get underground lines. But in Manchester they had; and yet there, though the National Company is giving an efficient service, a new company applied for a licence, with the support, I believe, of the Corporation. That does not look as if competition within the same area is such a dangerous thing for the municipality. Then there is another alternative. The local authority may buy up the National Company in any area, or—and I think this is much the more likely course—it may connect the service of the company and that of the municipality. We are offering them every inducement to do that. We have said if they will do it we will buy up their new plant. It is said that the National Telephone Company would never connect with the exchange of another company or Corporation, but that is not the opinion of the very able manager, who said in the Committee that he did not think there would be any practical difficulty in carrying out such an arrangement. I believe, too, that the company would find it to its own interest to adopt such a course, and effect such a combination. It has been objected that Corporations would not give a popular service. Corporations will have to please their constituents, and if their constituents wanted this service

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and did not get it, they would turn out the Corporation who refused it and put in one who would give it. What are the inducements to a popular service? Well, in America, within the last three years, since the service has been made a toll one, it has grown by leaps and bounds, and only yesterday I read a statement in the paper to the effect that Germany has also introduced the toll system, and is popularising its service, not only in Berlin, but throughout the country, and the system is working well. I have only one other remark to make with regard to the question which has been raised as to the sinking fund. It has been urged that we do not give Corporations sufficient time to recoup their expenditure. I think that even 12 years is a considerable time for that purpose. When we recollect the conditions we are offering, they would only have to redeem 50 per cent. of their capital by 1911. We do not regard it as by any means a certainty that 1911 will see the end of the licences of the new licensees. If nationalisation is as unpopular with the Government of that day as it is with the present Government, municipalities will retain the service long after 1911. I hope I have made the case perfectly clear. I hope there is no impression that we are anxious in any way to take an unfair advantage of the National Company. On the contrary, I think I have shown the House that, if our proposals are accepted, that company will be in a better position than they have ever been before—they will, at least, be in a much more certain position. Not only that, but they will get a popular service, and a service not dependent on a precarious tenure as it is now. I hope the House, looking at the emergency of the case, and to the fact that the United Kingdom lags far behind other countries in the matter of telephonic communication, which is so essential to our trade and commerce, will agree to the Second Reading of the Bill, and pass it through its other stages without any unnecessary delay.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Hanbury.*)

SIR J. JOICEY (Durham, Chester-le-Street): I feel some hesitation in rising to address the House immediately after

the right hon. Gentleman has moved the Second Reading of the Bill. But as I was one of the Members of the Committee, and paid great attention to the evidence which was given before that Committee, I thought it my duty to state my views, if they do not altogether coincide with those of the right hon. Gentleman, as early as possible. No one recognises more than I do the efforts made by the right hon. Gentleman to elicit all the facts of the case during the proceedings in Committee, and I am bound to say that we could not have had a Chairman who was more anxious to be impartial, and to bring the Committee to a satisfactory decision on the subject before them. But, Sir, in the course of those proceedings I am bound to say that the evidence which was elicited bears out to a very considerable extent the statements which were made by the right hon. Gentleman in the course of his speech. I can confirm his statement that the National Telephone Company has done good service; that service, like that of all public companies, has been to some extent insufficient and inadequate.

Attention called to the fact that forty Members were not present; House counted, and, forty Members being found present.

SIR J. JOICEY (continuing): I was saying that I agreed with the right hon. Gentleman that the service of the National Telephone Company was inefficient and certainly inadequate. But I am bound to recognise the difficulties that any public company has to contend with in developing a new service. Many of the patents were untried, and a good deal of the work was new to those who had to produce it, and under these circumstances some allowance should be made for any great company which is doing public work or public service as the National Telephone Company has been doing. Now, Sir, I have not the slightest interest in the National Telephone Company, either directly or indirectly, for had that been the case I certainly would not have been a Member of the Committee. Whilst I attended the sittings I, like every other Member, so far as I know, and particularly like the right hon. Gentleman who was the Chairman, endeavoured to give impartial consideration to

every question brought before the Committee. But, Sir, whilst I was in that position I was prejudiced neither in favour of the Post Office nor the National Telephone Company. My object was to render such service to the community as I was able to. Now, Sir, I am bound to say that the National Telephone service, if you look round and see the ground that it occupies, which forms a very small proportion of the whole country, certainly is inadequate. I must say, as a member of the Committee, that I was somewhat astonished at the policy which had been pursued by the Post Office. I was certainly under the impression that if the Post Office believed competition to be a good thing, they, having the power both to compete themselves and to compete by means of other licensees, ought to have developed competition. But, instead of developing competition, so far as I was able to gather from the evidence, they rather discouraged it; nay, they encouraged the National Telephone Company to get rid of its old competitors. Well, what was the object of that? They believed ultimately that there would have to be a national system, and they encouraged the National Telephone Company to get rid of its competitors, so that in the event of the adoption of a national system there would be only one system to purchase. That was the impression which I got from the evidence, but I cannot say what impression other members of the Committee received. There is no doubt whatever that there was great necessity for competition so long as the service was in the hands of one company, call it an Imperial company, or call it what you like. Had it been, like the Post Office, in the hands of a Department of the State, it could have developed the system perfectly, so far as perfection can be got by a State Department, and then, I think, competition would not have been necessary. But what did the National Telephone Company do? The National Telephone Company did what every other company composed of private individuals would do. It selected, first, those localities where it thought it could develop a system with the greatest advantage to itself. Well, I do not blame the National Telephone Company for doing that. It is just what any other public company would do; a railway company, for instance, or a gas-works company, or a water company, naturally develops those

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sources which it thinks it can develop with the greatest advantage to itself. Well, I must say that there are many disadvantages in connection with having more than one supply, so that I can appreciate to a certain extent the action of the Post Office. I happen to live at Newcastle-on-Tyne, where we have a dual service—a service by the National Telephone Company and a service by the Post Office—and I must say that while I believe in that city we have perhaps one of the best services that the Post Office gives in any part of the country, yet I do think that it would be more conducive to the interests of the users of the telephone if these undertakings were in one hand. Why is that? Every tradesman, every manufacturer, who finds it necessary to have the telephone, instead of having one telephone, always has to have two, in order to communicate with the whole of the subscribers. Of course, if there were a communication between the two authorities, the necessity for this would to a large extent disappear; but I am one of those who believe, notwithstanding all my right hon. friend has said, that it would be very much better to have one service. Well, I must say that there are many disadvantages in the course which was recommended by the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman. I certainly think it would be very much more to the interests of the community if we had a national system of telephones worked on the same principle as the Post Office and the telegraph system. Why I object to my right hon. friend's Bill is this. We had a Committee which went into the whole question, and, so far as I am able to gather from the Bill of my right hon. friend, I cannot see that the Bill is based on the Report of the Committee. In the first place, the Report goes into the question as to whether the Post Office have the right of being just and equitable to the National Telephone Company by allowing competition. Well, that point is perfectly cleared up to my satisfaction, and I consider, as the Report states, there is little doubt, in my mind, that the postal authorities have full power to give such competition. But then there is another reason why competition is desirable, and what did the Committee say that reason was? On page 10 of the Report it is stated:

"Competition appears to be both expedient and necessary—first, to extend and popularise

the service, and next to avoid a danger which is by no means remote if no alternative system is in operation—the purchase of the company's undertaking at a price forced upon the Government of the day."

There are two distinct objects which the Committee had in recommending competition. One was that it should extend and popularise the service, and everyone who really knows what the service is in other parts of the world—in America, for instance, and in Berlin—will agree with me that there is much to be done in this country yet before the telephone service is developed as it should be. So far as Berlin is concerned, I believe, with a very much smaller population than in London, there are nearly twice as many subscribers to the telephone as there are in London. But I am glad to say that while Berlin is greatly ahead of London, when you take the whole of Germany into consideration, and compare it with the whole of England, the Post Office authorities who have been sent over have stated that undoubtedly England was ahead.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS : No, no !

SIR J. JOICEY : I am quite prepared to substantiate what I have stated. However, let us take the other part of the Report. There is always a doubt in the Report as to whether licences should be given to municipal authorities or not.

"Your Committee would recommend that if licences be granted to local authorities the precedent of the Electric Light Act of 1882 should be followed."

If—there is always a doubt. Then, further—

"So far, therefore, as the legal or equitable rights of the company, or licensee, or other interests of the locality are concerned, your Committee see no reason why licences should not be granted to local authorities."

I want to make this plain, because it will be recognised that it is very important. Let us look at what is stated at the end of the Report. I was very much astonished at my right hon. friend not alluding to this Report in his very excellent and able speech. I certainly thought that if the Bill was to carry out the recommendations of the Committee he would have referred to the Report. But what does it state ?

"On reviewing the whole of the evidence, your Committee is strongly of opinion that

general, immediate, and effective competition by either the Post Office or the local authority is necessary, and consider that a really efficient Post Office service affords the best means for securing this competition."

If that is not a strong recommendation for Her Majesty's Government to take over the control of, or compete with, telephones in connection with this important system, I do not know what is. Then again :

"Your Committee, in thus recommending a Post Office service, assume it will constitute a real and active competition, and that concessions to the company not required by them will cease ; such competition should, in their hands, be carried on by a distinct and separate branch of the Department, and in future be conducted under strictly businesslike conditions by a staff specially qualified for such a duty."

On looking through the Bill brought in by the right hon. Gentleman, I am bound to say that it does not carry out the recommendations of the Committee. Here is a distinct recommendation that the Post Office is the best authority to compete with the National Telephone Company, and that they ought to establish a separate Department in order to do it satisfactorily.

MR. HANBURY : I think the recommendation of the Committee there was that it should be a separate department of the Post Office, to deal with the National Telephone Company and other telephone services.

SIR J. JOICEY : I will leave the House to judge of the words without the right hon. Gentleman's explanation. Let us see what the words are—

"On reviewing the whole of the evidence, your Committee is strongly of opinion that general, immediate, and effective competition, by either the Post Office or local authority, is necessary, and consider that a really efficient Post Office service affords the best means of securing such competition."

MR. HANBURY : Read on.

SIR J. JOICEY :

"We further consider that when in an existing area in which there is an exchange the local authority demands a complete service, the Post Office ought either to start an efficient telephone system itself"—of course, that is our recommendation—"or grant a licence to the local authority."

Yes, but what does it say before ? "We consider that a really efficient Post Office service affords the best means of securing such competition." It is perfectly clear that it is the intention of the Committee that the competition should be by the Post Office, and by the Post Office alone.

"Your Committee, in thus recommending a Post Office service, assume it will constitute a real and active competition, that concessions to the company not required by them will cease. Such competition should in their hands be carried on by a distinct and separate branch of the Department"—that is, by the Post Office—"and in future be conducted under strictly business-like conditions by a staff specially qualified for such a duty."

Of course, the "staff" alluded to is the staff employed under the Post Office in connection with the Telephone Department, which the Committee recommend. It is perfectly clear that the Bill does not carry out these recommendations. The right hon. Gentleman, in the course of his speech, stated that the National Telephone Company picked the plums of the different areas. I am not surprised at that. But if the service is not effective, the Post Office, in order to carry out the recommendations of the Committee, is bound to compete with the National Telephone Company in those particular areas, and to establish a telephone system in areas where the National Telephone Company does not exist. Then the right hon. Gentleman went on to show the difficulties in connection with giving other licensees powers to establish a telephone system. I am not in favour of giving other licensees such powers. The Post Office should have no other competitor than the National Telephone Company, because I look forward to the time when it will be absolutely necessary that the whole telephone system should be conducted by the Post Office Department, and on that ground it would be very much better indeed if the Post Office Department practically covered the ground where telephones do not now exist. Then with regard to way-leaves, he said the pulling up of the streets would be a difficulty ; that you could not expect municipal authorities to give power to any licensees other than the Post Office to pull up streets. I doubt whether the right hon. Gentleman's judgment is accurate in that. No doubt there might be one or two municipalities who would object. There are municipalities who object to everything where the public convenience is concerned. As a rule, municipalities

look after the interests of the ratepayers in their own localities excellently, but wherever the public interest clashes with their own, they support their own as against that of the public. The difficulties as to the way-leave question are more imaginary than real. The Post Office would bring such power to bear on local authorities that they would not have much difficulty in getting the necessary way-leaves. I was surprised to hear the right hon. Gentleman express the belief that it was quite possible that the National Telephone Company would have its licence extended, and that it is quite possible that the municipalities if they adopt the telephone system would have their licences extended beyond 1911. I was under the impression that the Committee recommended distinctly that no licences should extend beyond 1911. Possibly the right hon. Gentleman sees difficulties in the way, and that is why he made that statement ; because what would happen, supposing this Bill were passed, and under it a large number of municipalities were to get the power of establishing telephones in their own areas ? The licences would all expire in 1911. The same thing would occur as the chairman of the National Telephone Company said would happen. After 1904, in all probability, all capital expenditure would cease. Possibly some arrangement would be come to that that capital expenditure should be made under the surveillance of the Post Office authorities. But supposing a number of municipalities carried out this telephone system with licences expiring in 1911, and that certain arrangements were made that their plant should be taken over by the Post Office ? What I am afraid of is that where these municipal authorities start telephones some of them may make it a very profitable business. Does anybody in this House believe that a Government could be found to stand against the municipal interest of this country, and to say that they would refuse to extend the licences ? The pressure which would be brought to bear upon any Government by the municipal representatives in this House would compel them to yield. If you took them over what would be the result ? You would have to give enormous compensation. Every municipal authority that was making these profits would have a heavy vested interest, and the vested interests to be dealt with in 1911 in connection

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with the municipal authorities would be a hundred times as great as those we have to deal with now in connection with the National Telephone Company. That is why I think it would be disastrous to allow municipal authorities to have licences to work the telephone system. Suppose you applied the same rule to the Post Office system, and allowed all municipal authorities to deliver the letters in their own localities. The principle is exactly the same. I wonder what would become of the poor outlying country districts that now do not pay their expenses. How do you expect to get the outlying country districts brought into connection with the telephone centres if you are to allow the profits realised from the service in our large cities to be swallowed up by the municipalities? All the profits realised in these large towns ought to go to the purse of the Post Office to be used in developing the system in the outlying districts. I challenge any Member who represents an agricultural county to vote for this Bill, which is in direct opposition to the interests of all who live in agricultural districts. There are some Members who are very anxious for municipal authorities to practically control all the telephone system in their own localities; there are some people who really, when the word "municipality" is mentioned, seem to grovel at it, and are prepared to give it any powers whatever. No one recognises more than I do the splendid services municipalities have rendered to the country, but there are some municipalities which are not fit for these powers, and whose localities would be better attended to by the Department. I cannot support this Bill without further consideration. If this Bill represents the only conclusion the Government can come to, I think they have been rather hasty in deciding this most important question, which will affect not only the present generation, but the next also. I hope the Government may be induced to withdraw this measure, or, at all events, to give further consideration to the question, so that we may not enter upon an important scheme like this, affecting every part of the country, without having looked fairly at all sides of the matter.

MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN (Kent, Tunbridge): I confess I am at a loss to understand the speech of the hon. Gentleman who has just spoken. When I

understood from the beginning of his speech that he intended to oppose this Bill, I thought it was because he did not approve of the Report of the Committee of which he was a member. But we are given to understand that he does not in the least disapprove of the Report, but he complains that this Bill does not carry out its recommendations. I would ask anyone who has read the Report in what respects it differs from the Bill. The Report is a practically unanimous one; it was carried by a large Committee with only five Divisions, and after the most careful consideration the Committee recommended "general, immediate, and effective competition," either by the Post Office or by local authorities. What does this Bill do? It asks for powers to be given for "general, immediate, and effective competition" with the National Telephone Company, either by the Post Office or by local authorities. Can any man, comparing the Report with the Bill, say that there is any discrepancy whatever? I thought we had come to a very sensible Report, and that the Government had taken very immediate steps to carry it out, and the very last thing I expected was for a member of the Committee to get up and tell us that the Bill did not do what the Committee recommended. If the Committee did not recommend competition by these two methods, what did it recommend? The hon. Gentleman appears to think that it recommended nationalisation. He talked a good deal about the State acquiring the telephone and working it all by itself. But, in that case, where is the competition? The word "competition" clearly contemplates that there must be two people, each working, in some sense, in opposition to the other. To pretend, therefore, that when we use the word "competition" we mean "nationalisation" is to make a pretence which the words of the Report cannot possibly support. The hon. Baronet also tries to throw discredit upon the statements of my right hon. friend by saying that some expert, whose name I did not gather, who was sent over to Germany, told us that England was far in advance of Germany in the matter of the telephone. If that is so, that is not the opinion of so eminent an authority as Mr. Preece, the Engineer of the Post Office, and by no means an enemy of the National Telephone Company or a friend of the system of municipalisation, for in

answer to Question 5171, which I put to him myself—the question being, “Comparing Germany with England”—he said, “Well, there is no doubt they are very much in advance of us,” and he evidently held that the system which prevails in Germany, which is not an unregulated monopoly in the hands of a company such as we have here, was infinitely superior, and had developed the telephone there to an extent to which it has not been developed here.

SIR J. JOICEY : Do I understand the hon. Member to controvert my statement that while Berlin is ahead of London, yet Germany is behind England as a whole so far as subscribers are concerned ?

MR. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN : Yes, certainly. That statement was made by Mr. Preece. In cross-examination he modified it. He said, “Well, there is no doubt they are very much in advance of us.” I cannot attempt to explain any discrepancy, but that was the modification of his original statement, and I give it to the House for what it is worth.

SIR J. JOICEY : May I read question 5100 ? “Then as far as London and Berlin goes, London is behind Germany, is it not ?” This is what Mr. Preece said :—“London is behind Berlin, but England is in advance of Germany.”

MR. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN : I do not wish to weary the House by going into this question in detail, but I will now quote question 5170 :

“That, I think, there is no doubt about. Speaking of Germany as a whole, do you think Germany is very much behind us ? Have you any figures for the whole of Germany as compared with the whole of England ?”

He answered, “No. I think as a rule the telephone in Germany is more advanced than in Scandinavia.” I asked him, “Yes, but I am comparing it with England.” He replied, “Well, with England; there is no doubt in Germany they are much in advance of us.” I pressed it home. “They are in advance of us ?” “There is no doubt at all about it.” I do not think I can go beyond that; but if anything more is really wanted, all I can do is to quote the figures that have been

already given by my right hon. friend, in which he shows that, whereas in England one person in 636 possesses the telephone—

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON : Ridiculous !

MR. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN : I am afraid I cannot accept my right hon. friend's view that these figures are ridiculous seeing they are official statements, put in in evidence, and not my own. My right hon. friend who introduced the Bill has stated that they are taken from a return that he received quite recently. I know perfectly well how my right hon. friend arrives at the idea that these figures are ridiculous. It is because the National Telephone Company has got a very clever plan of including with exchange telephones the private wires. Mr. Forbes did that in giving his evidence, and when cross-examined by me he had to admit that it included private wires. Private wires do not benefit the general bulk of the community in the least. They are mere private machines for the private use of private individuals. If you compare the number of exchange telephones plus private wires in England with the number of exchange telephones without private wires in Germany you will institute a perfectly unfair comparison. That is exactly what the National Telephone Company in a great many instances have done, and that no doubt is the cause of the discrepancy which appears ridiculous to my right hon. friend. The fact remains absolutely proved—it has never been disproved—that while this country is far in advance of most foreign countries in regard to nearly every mechanical appliance, we lag behind the rest of the world in regard to telephones. The figures have never been contradicted, that in Norway one person in 144 was on the telephone; in Sweden one in 147; in Luxembourg one in 160; in Switzerland one in 172.

AN HON. MEMBER : Will the hon. Member tell us whether they are under State agency or under private agency ?

MR. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN : In the case of Norway and Sweden you have State agency, local companies, and also municipal telephones. In Stockholm

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you have local companies and also State agency. In a great many places in Sweden you have local companies. In Luxembourg and Switzerland it is State agency. In Germany, which has a State system, one person in 440 is on the telephone. That is a step worse than the system of local companies and municipalities combined that prevails in Sweden; but when you come to the United Kingdom, you get a step still further worse—one in 636. That is the result of an unregulated monopoly, and the object of this Bill is to break down as quickly as possible this most unfortunate monopoly, which the Post Office has allowed to grow up. Are we prepared to acquiesce in a state of affairs in which we lag so far behind the rest of the world? Are we willing for our trade to be handicapped by the fact that our telephone system is run not for the benefit of the public, but for the benefit of the shareholders of the National Telephone Company? What is the prime cause which makes us lag so far behind other countries? What precisely is it that places us under this disadvantage? It is the excessive cost of the telephone in this country. Compare London with Berlin. I will quote Mr. Forbes, who says that "the mean cost of the telephone in London is about £14, while in Berlin it is £7 10s." What possible reason can there be why we should pay twice as much in London for the use of the telephone as they do in Berlin? Take the case of a country where the telephone has been extended, not merely as in England to the larger towns, but, practically, to every small country place, *i.e.*, Jutland, in Denmark. In Jutland there are no less than 300 exchanges, and the subscription rate varies from £3 10s. to £4 3s. per annum. I venture to think that in this country we might develop the telephone to a very large extent in our country districts just as they have in Jutland. Why do we not do it? Because we are in the hands of the National Telephone Company, who do not see an immediate prospect of a large return, and who, therefore, will not go to the country districts; and because, if they did go, they would impose a rate which is altogether beyond the reach of the people living in the country. We are constantly told that the thing cannot be done in this country at a lower rate, and Mr. Forbes talks about the "relative values," and all the

rest of it, and that labour is cheaper in Germany, and, therefore, the telephone is cheaper. I am quite prepared to admit that; but, even so, I deny that if we had a proper system the telephone would be so much dearer in England than it actually is, and for this reason. Attempts have been made, not successfully so far, because the policy of the Government has been against it, to introduce a different system of telephony in this country. In Glasgow, for instance, an estimate was got out for setting up a complete system of exchanges. What was the rate to be? Was it £14, as under the National Telephone Company in London, or £8 or £10, as is charged by the company in a great many country towns? No, the charge suggested was five guineas. It was proved conclusively at the inquiry in Glasgow that the telephone might be made to pay exceedingly well in the hands of the Corporation at that rate. Then there is the extraordinary instance of Guernsey, where a local system has been set up. Already one in about 86 of the population has gone on to the system, as compared with one in about 600 in the neighbouring island of Jersey, which is in the hands of the National Telephone Company; and the rate charged in Guernsey is infinitely cheaper than the rate which is now being charged in Jersey, even after a very large reduction has been made. There are two reasons why these high rates are charged. The first is because the company, having a monopoly, is doing what everybody else with a monopoly would do—it is making as much as it possibly can; and the second is that the company is bound to pay interest upon a capital which is altogether too large. We have heard a great deal about the capital of the National Telephone Company. It has been said that it is very unfair to talk about "water" with the National Telephone Company. I will quote the words of Mr. Forbes, and the House will see what the chairman of the company admits is the extra amount of capital upon which this interest has to be paid. Mr. Forbes, in the 1895 inquiry, Question 4787, said:

"The total amount of money spent on the actual construction of the thing was £1,813,000; the amalgamation value and purchase value (those are the figures I read to you) was £3,105,000. The difference (what some people are pleased to call the water value) was £1,292,000."

Therefore the people of this country have to pay extra rates in order to provide the National Telephone Company with the interest upon this £1,292,000. Whatever may be the position of the National Telephone Company, is it right, is it fair, is it in the interest of the general public that they should be left in the enjoyment of that monopoly, and that our telephone rates should be determined, not by the actual cost of the service, but by the amount of "water" the company have to pay interest upon? It has been said that we are dealing unfairly with the National Telephone Company by bringing in this Bill. In the conversation which has been going on in the Lobby—and there has been a great deal of conversation in the Lobby in the last two days—I have heard the statement over and over again that nothing more scandalous was ever done, especially by a Conservative Government, than to ask the Post Office to compete with what they are pleased to call "their own partner." If there was any suggestion of unfairness in this competition, I should be the very last to advocate it, and the right hon. Gentleman would have been the last person to bring in a Bill which did any injustice to the National Telephone Company, or any other company working under a licence from the Crown. What is the fact? The fact is that throughout the whole of this business the Post Office has always retained to itself an absolute right of competition, and has laid down emphatically times out of number that no company would have any cause of complaint if competition were started. The Treasury Minute of 1892, which has been so often quoted, after laying down that no new licences would be granted for the whole country says:

"But although this is the policy which commends itself to Her Majesty's Government, it must be distinctly understood that should licences hereafter be granted on other principles, no company now or hereafter to be licensed will have any ground to complain of breach of contract or want of good faith on the part of the Postmaster-General."

Let us take the licence under which the National Telephone Company works at the present moment. Their licence was granted, I think, in 1884, and confirmed by a subsequent licence in 1892, and contains these words:

"Nothing in these presents contained shall prejudice or affect the right of the Post-

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master-General from time to time to establish, extend, maintain and work any system or systems of telegraphic communication (whether of a like nature to the aforesaid business of the company or otherwise) in such manner as he shall in his discretion think fit."

Lastly, Mr. Forbes is asked by the Committee which sat in 1895 (Question 4644) whether he agreed with Mr. Lamb that "there is not even an honourable engagement on the part of the Post Office not to grant competing services," and he answered, "The Post Office are absolutely free. I will go a little further, and say that in all the negotiations (which were prolonged) there never was the slightest suggestion, directly or indirectly, of any such cession on the part of the Post Office, or a promise or pledge to lock up their discretion." It is proved up to the hilt by documents that anybody can inspect that there is no question that the Post Office has an absolute right to compete with the National Telephone Company, either by itself or by licensing other companies, or by licensing municipalities; and the suggestion that in so doing they will be acting in bad faith will not hold water for a single instant. I know perfectly well that my right hon. friend says such a suggestion has never been made. Mr. Forbes came before the Committee last year, and suggested that we should be acting in bad faith, or that there would be some breach of an understanding—an understanding going behind a legal document—if any sort of competition were started. Mr. Forbes was confronted with the evidence that he himself gave in 1895; and what happened subsequently? All the Postmaster-Generals and Chancellors of the Exchequer who have been in office while these negotiations were pending, one after the other, came before the Committee, and said there had been no such understanding at all, and they alleged, one after another, in perfectly clear terms, that the Post Office were absolutely free to compete with the National Telephone Company themselves or by any of their nominees. There is no doubt that the opposition to this Bill has come from the statement which has been sedulously circulated by the agents and friends of the National Telephone Company that we are acting in an unfair spirit in asking for competition. It is only fair that the House should know that there is not the slightest truth in the suggestion. What is the real opposition to this Bill?

It comes from a variety of sources. There are some persons who hold that municipal trading is a bad thing. It is rather late in the day to suggest that, because a great many municipalities now are responsible for their own gas, water, and electric light, and my limited experience goes to show that, as a rule, they do these things very well indeed. But this is not even municipal trading, because it has been laid down in the Report of the Select Committee, and confirmed in a Treasury Minute, that the telephone is not to be worked by the municipalities at a profit. I do not understand what sort of trading there can be when the idea of profit is absolutely wiped out. Other persons object to competition, and say it would be much better that the telephone should be in the hands of any one authority. Probably one unified system for the telephone would be the best plan if we could get it. No doubt that is what ought to have been done when the telephone was started some years ago. But that was not done, and are we to waste the ratepayers' money in buying up a large amount of obsolete plant at an inflated price in order to obtain what theoretically might be the best system? When people talk about the evils of competition, I am doubtful whether they have considered what competition has existed in the case of the telephone, and what the result has been. It has been admitted by all who have studied the question that the best town in the world, so far as the telephone service goes, is Stockholm, and yet in Stockholm you have three competitors working together and competing with each other. The hon. Baronet opposite said that was all very well, but in Stockholm the telephone does not pay. At all events, the chairman of the largest company in Stockholm stated before the Glasgow inquiry that they paid a dividend of 8 per cent. and were only precluded from paying more because 8 per cent was the limit allowed by their articles of association. Therefore the Stockholm Company under competition pays better than the National Telephone Company does with a system of monopoly; and I venture to think that the stimulus of competition might have a good effect even on the National Telephone Company. Other people object to this proposal because they think the local authorities are not the proper bodies to develop the system in the country districts, I do not know that local authori-

ties would be likely to develop the system very largely in the country districts, but if you allow the large municipalities to develop the system in their own localities you leave the Post Office free to go into the country districts and develop the system there, where the telephone has never been introduced at all. Therefore the provisions of this Bill will allow not merely local authorities to establish telephone services, but also enable the Post Office to do so in order to supplement the admittedly inadequate service which exists now, and then I think you will cover the country with the telephone in a manner which has never been done hitherto. I apologise for detaining the House so long, and I do not wish to occupy the time of the House longer, but I do urge the Government most strongly to persevere in this matter. The present system is admittedly wrong and inadequate. The telephone service in many places is bad, and even where it is good, as my right hon. friend pointed out, it only touches the upper classes, and it does not provide the telephone for the masses. There is an extraordinary absence of call offices everywhere, which does not conduce to make the telephone popular, and it does not go to the smaller places. The company appear to have only picked out the plums and taken the telephone there. Not only is the telephone system defective now, but it is likely to be more defective in the future. Mr. Forbes has said that in the year 1904 the National Telephone Company would be probably obliged to refuse all new subscribers; therefore I ask what is to be done? Can we allow a system which is defective now to continue, especially when it is likely to become more defective in the future? Can we contemplate with equanimity the suggestion that five years hence no new subscribers are to be allowed to go on the telephone, and that no further development of the telephone system is to take place in any part of the country? It appears to me clear that something must be done, and must be done quickly, and the question is what is to be done? The Government propose that the system of the National Telephone Company should be supplemented by competition, and by giving to places where the National Telephone Company now does not exist power to establish a system partly by the Post Office and partly by the local authorities. To me that seems to be a reasonable and prac-

tical suggestion. The only other alternative is that the companies should be bought out now, in which case you will be buying a lot of plant which is on the single-wire system, which has now become obsolete, and you would pay a price for it altogether too big, and just about twice the amount for which the whole plant of the National Telephone Company could be replaced. That is the alternative, and I understand that the Government have not the slightest intention, as a national policy, of buying up the National Telephone Company. Something must be done, and I urge the Government to pass this Bill, which has been already well considered. I understand that there is a suggestion to refer this Bill to a Select Committee. That is the most transparent device for delay that I ever heard in the House of Commons, and there is nothing which the National Telephone Company desires more than that this measure should be referred to a Select Committee. We have had Select Committees on this question, and last year we went into the subject as fully as any Select Committee could possibly do. I say that this suggestion for a Committee is a mere device for delay, and I hope the Government will persevere in their intention, and that they will pass this Bill through its Second Reading to-night, or as soon as possible, and that they will certainly refuse the suggestion to refer the measure to a Select Committee.

***SIR JOHN LUBBOCK** (London University): The Secretary to the Treasury has made a very able speech, but a great deal of it was against one of the principal proposals in his own Bill. He has shown the grave and indeed conclusive reasons against the telephone service being undertaken by Government, and yet he proposes that Government should undertake it throughout the metropolitan area. The Government have promised an enquiry into the whole question of municipal trading, and yet they themselves propose a great extension of the system. Is any Bill really needed? Is the telephone system generally inefficient? It is much more recent than telegraphy, and yet, last year, while there were only 80,000,000 telegrams there

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were over 540,000,000 messages sent through the telephone. It is idle, therefore, to talk of it as inefficient. If the telephone system is inefficient, how shall we characterise the failure of the telegraph system? But then it is said that the service here is more expensive. The comparison is very difficult. In Germany and Sweden Sir W. H. Preece believes that the State works the telephone at a loss, though there seem to be no accounts which show the result clearly. Moreover, in this country the company has to pay 10 per cent. of its gross receipts to the Government; and if the railway companies had had to pay 10 per cent. of their gross receipts to Government, does anyone suppose that our railway system would have been as good as it is? But when comparing our telephone system with that of other countries we must remember that the company here has also to pay way-leaves. These items amount to some £3, which must be allowed for in comparison. Again, in Germany a night service is not given. Lastly, under existing conditions the English company has to amortize its stock by the year 1911. On the whole, therefore, it is almost impossible to make any exact comparison. But are we behind other countries? Here I will quote a very high authority, Sir W. H. Preece, the engineer in chief and electrician to the Post Office. He said in his evidence given before last year's Committee (p. 277):

"It is a most astonishing thing that, in the Press and all you read, they speak of the telephone system in England being so backward—so much behind other countries; as a matter of fact we are before Germany. The condition of telephones in this country is very advanced indeed, and it is a most unjust thing to have it constantly appearing in the Press and other places that the telephone in England is far behind the age."

Many of the complaints of the telephone rise from inexperience in its use. Sir W. H. Preece pointed this out to the Committee of last year, and expressed his opinion that

"If one-quarter of the intelligence (no doubt he meant the practice) of the operator were transferred to the subscriber, 99 per cent. of the complaints would cease."

I come now to the clauses which authorise and encourage municipalities to engage in

the telephone business. Sir, our manufacturers and chambers of commerce view with much alarm the tendency of municipalities to engage in trading transactions. Some 200 petitions have been presented to the House this year by manufacturers and others, protesting against this tendency of the day. In the first place it will inevitably lead to an increase of rates. Business is not the plain sailing which some persons suppose. All those who have had to do with patents know how risky they are. For one patent which gives a profit, 10 leave a loss. I am not going to argue against the management of gas and water by municipalities. In some cases, at any rate, this may be desirable. There is, however, no member of the Government whose opinion on such a matter is entitled to greater weight than the Attorney-General. As Chairman of the Council of the Society of Arts he has had exceptional opportunities of studying the question, and he has told us :

"Whatever might be said as to the profit made out of undertakings such as gas or tramways worked by corporations, his belief was that if the matter were thrashed out it would be found that the burden on the ordinary ratepayer was less where no such risks were undertaken."

Mr. Acworth, who has made a special study of this subject, has said :

"Anybody who knew the working of a corporation, as distinguished from a private trading body, knew that if a corporation had not an absolute monopoly it was bound to go to the wall."

He further says :

"That workmen invariably do less work for a municipality than for a private owner; he did not know why they should, but experience proved that it was so."

Here, again, I may quote the very able Government Commissioner in the Glasgow inquiry. He gives his reason for thinking that the municipality have not considered the cost :

"All this shows that the Corporation have not really faced the question of finance, and, considering that the Corporation have a loan of £8,000,000, it seems to me that, from a ratepayers' point of view, it is a somewhat hazardous proposal that the Corporation should construct an entirely new telephone system . . . upon expectations which depend mainly on theoretical estimates and opinions; especially when it is remembered that the members of the Corporation have little or no personal knowledge of the construction and management of a telephone system."

My next reason for objecting to municipalities undertaking these new duties is the immense amount of debt which it will involve. Already that debt is enormous, is increasing, and must in any case increase. But if we put on them these new duties it will become something portentous. Moreover, you will alter the whole character of these municipal loans. Now they are safe, because municipalities do not engage in risky operations; but if they are to compete with building societies, to run tramways and omnibuses, carry out gas and electric lighting, work the telephones, and become manufacturers of the appliances used in these trades, the result will be that some municipalities, at any rate, will lose large sums, and municipal stocks will fluctuate according to their success or failure like those of other manufacturing concerns. Some municipalities will inevitably ruin themselves. The next objection is the amount of work which it will throw on these local bodies. There are many men who will give much of their time to public duties; but if they have to devote the whole they will not do so, and cannot be expected to do so, without payment. You will make it quite a big business. Surely the condition of New York ought to be a warning to us. Another result of this policy will be the enormous multiplication of municipal employees. The councillors will have to settle the wages of the electors. The results are easy to foresee. We have had some experience of that already. Victoria has lost £8,000,000 by its railways. And why? The Government appointed a Commission to inquire into the circumstances, and they reported that the railways were over-manned, and that the staff were overpaid. There were two persons to do the work of one. They proposed numerous economies, but in the words of the *Economist* :

"It is already clear that these proposals will meet with the strenuous opposition of the employees, who, unlike the Department itself, which is described as 'disorganised, if not demoralised,' are closely organised. The Board report in connection with this matter that there are seven associations established amongst the employees, the avowed object of the members of all being to protect their rights and privileges. The secretary of the association (an engine-driver), in the course of a long speech, denounced the report of the Board in unmeasured terms, calling its statements 'lies,' that a principal and valuable witness was a 'cast-off expert in another colony,' that the Board had proved 'an abor-

tion and a sham;’ and so on. All this stuff was punctuated by ‘loud and prolonged cheering,’ etc. The Speaker of the Legislative Assembly assured the audience that, ‘as ever, the working classes of the colony had his full sympathy;’ and other Members of Parliament talked ambiguously, one inciting the men to prepare for ‘the ordeal that would be sure to come.’”

The Society of Arts have expressed themselves strongly on the subject. They urged the Government to appoint a Royal Commission to enquire into it, and added :

“They venture to submit that until such Royal Commission has investigated the subject and reported thereon, no further powers for trading purposes ought to be granted to such bodies.”

The municipalities themselves have not asked for it. The Government have shown that they consider the question of municipal trading as a very grave question by themselves proposing not merely a Committee of this House, but a Joint Committee with the House of Lords on the question. Surely they ought not to prejudice it. This Bill proposes a great extension of municipal trading. Surely the Council of the London Chamber of Commerce were logical when they unanimously resolved :

“To urge on the Government that it is undesirable that the Postmaster-General should license the councils or county boroughs to provide systems of public telephonic communication, pending the Report of the Joint Committee about to be appointed by the two Houses to consider the whole question of municipal trading, and to urge upon the Government that, pending the report of the Joint Committee to be appointed by the two Houses on municipal trading, the *Telegraphs (Telephonic Communication, &c.) Bill* should be postponed.”

Now, Sir, I come to the second part of the Bill—the proposal of the Government to institute a telephone service in London, and ultimately to work the whole system. This is open to most of the objections against municipalisation, and some others. There is the risk, I was going to say the certainty, of loss, which will fall on the taxpayers generally for the benefit of the few. There is the objection to increasing the number of employees. There is also the objection that it will check private enterprise and stop the progress of applied science. The right hon. Gentleman in his speech gave conclusive reasons against the nationalisation of the telephone, and yet he proposes to do in London exactly what he has himself

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denounced. If it be right in London, why is it wrong in other places? We have seen in various parts of the world the benumbing influence of the Government undertaking work of this kind. Take the case of railways in India. There is a great desire to invest English capital in China. Many English railway companies are working in other foreign countries. Why are no new companies being started in India? Because the Government make railways themselves, and naturally investors will not compete under such circumstances. A very interesting paper was read last April at the Society of Arts by Mr. Bell, who has made a special study of Indian railways and written a standard work on the subject. Mr. Bell was at first very much in favour of the management of railways by the Government, but the result of his experience had been to convince him that

“the only means of introducing a new and vigorous life into Indian railways is by inducing a free and unrestricted flow of private capital to India, and that this implies the gradual, but eventually complete, abandonment of State administration.”

He says :

“I have laid stress on what I should call the pernicious element in the present policy of the Government, i.e., the retention of the idea that the State must continue to exercise direct action in both the construction and working of railways. I have implied that this cannot co-exist with really vigorous life in private enterprise, and that it is the latter to which we should look as the ultimate and sole agency for such operations.”

Sir Julian Danvers, who has been connected with Indian railways from their commencement, and acted as Government director, so that he speaks with, perhaps, unrivalled experience, in the course of the discussion, expressed his opinion

“that the agency of companies was, upon the whole, the most satisfactory mode of carrying out railway enterprise. That seemed to be now the opinion of the Government. Railways, being commercial concerns, were better in the hands of those who could manage them on commercial principles. If the choice was between a State and a company, the latter was on the whole most desirable.”

I do not ask the House to accept any opinion of mine, but I may cite the very highest authority on such a question—the Society of Electrical Engineers. The society has passed the following resolution :

"That in the opinion of this Committee it is desirable, from the point of view of the progress of electrical engineering, for the purely local telephone industry throughout the country to be held as a monopoly; or that legislation on the future of telephony in these kingdoms should discourage the undertaking of exchange systems within telephone areas by independent enterprise."

I really could not myself put the case against the nationalisation of the telephone more strongly than it was put by my right hon. friend the Secretary to the Treasury in reply to a deputation. What has happened in the case of the telegraphs? Soon after they were purchased it was found that £1,000,000 had been spent, not only without the authority of Parliament, but actually without the head of the Department having the least idea that this had been done. Fortunately, the money was honestly spent, but it might have been otherwise. A few years later it was found that we were losing money by the telegraphs. It is often said that this is because we gave too much for them, but that is not the reason. In 1875, the Government appointed a Committee to inquire into the reason of the loss incurred by the telegraphs, and the Committee accounted for it by pointing out that the wages and salaries paid for the subordinate work had all been greatly raised. Since then the loss has been still further increased by the lowering of the charge for messages. The total loss, according to the last return, was £7,000,000. The loss last year was over £600,000, and according to the return the interest on the capital was £298,000; so that, even if nothing whatever had been given for the system, the actual loss on the working would have been over £300,000, and it is a loss which is increasing every year. Since the Bill was introduced a number of important bodies have passed resolutions with reference to it, and in moving the rejection I am not expressing merely my own opinion. The Corporation of Liverpool have resolved that they record their great dissatisfaction with the Government scheme for dealing with the telephone, and that they protest against the proposals embodied in the Telephone Bill. Resolutions condemning it have also been passed by the Liverpool Dock Board, and all the principal Liverpool associations, by the Chambers of Commerce of London, Liverpool, Birmingham, Bristol, Cardiff, Plymouth, Glasgow, Aberdeen, Edinburgh,

Belfast, Dublin, Nottingham, Sunderland, and some twenty others of our principal Chambers of Commerce; as well as many Stock Exchanges—for instance, those of Glasgow, Liverpool, and Manchester. This is surely a very remarkable consensus of opinion, and it is, moreover, the opinion of those whom the measure most concerns. I hardly remember any case in which such remarkable opposition was shown to a Bill. The right hon. Gentleman referred to the fact that the Associated Chambers of Commerce met and did not say a word about this measure. What happened? The Associated Chambers met after the Bill was introduced, and a very strong resolution was proposed condemning the Bill, but the London Chamber of Commerce thought that it would not be desirable that an opinion should be expressed on the Bill until there had been more ample opportunity for considering it. I was present, and in fact I myself seconded the previous question, on the ground—a very wise ground—that the Associated Chambers should not hastily pass such a resolution. For my part, I maintain that the telephone is nationalised already. The State receives one-tenth of the gross receipts. It gains £100,000 a year by the telephone and loses £600,000 a year by the telegraphs. Moreover, the gain by the telephone is increasing, and the loss by the telegraph is increasing. Surely the wise course is obvious. But we are asked by this Bill to do exactly the opposite. We are asked to abandon the system by which we profit, and replace it by the system under which we lose. I confess I doubt whether the Government have considered fully the course on which they are inviting us to embark in this and other similar Bills. The hon. Member for Battersea knows his own mind, and has the courage of his opinions. Lord Wemyss said, at the Society of Arts, he should like to ask Mr. Burns whether it was his view that all private property—what he called instruments of production—should be in the hands of the State or the municipalities. Mr. Burns at once answered "Yes." This is, indeed, the logical conclusion from the proposals contained in the Bill. The hon. Member for Battersea wishes that all the instruments of production in the country should be in the hands of municipalities or of the Government; but I do not think he can see the end of the road he is taking.

No doubt there often seems a temporary and specious advantage in a proposal that any given business should be undertaken by Government or municipalities. Why begin with the telephone? There are other things more important. Take the case of bread. Bread is more necessary than the telephone. Why should not the Government supply Londoners with bread? The profits of bakers are much larger than the dividends of the Telephone Company. The Government might largely reduce the number of shops and the expenses of distribution. Everyone admits it would be a mistake, but it seems to me that there is more to be said for taking up the business of bakers than that of telephones. The hon. Member for Battersea and his friends do not shrink from the proposal, and they are at least logical. I have shown that this Bill is opposed by the Society of Arts and Manufactures, by the Society of Electrical Engineers, by the great Chambers of Commerce, and by several of the Stock Exchanges—all, in fact, who have expressed any opinion on the subject. We contend that the commercial operations of the State and municipalities should be confined as strictly as possible. If a business is of great utility and cannot be carried on by private enterprise, there is no doubt a case for State intervention; but where, as in this case, the business can be and is conducted by able and responsible companies, the intrusion of the Government and municipalities is unwise, injurious, and contrary to public policy. I believe the State will lose, and lose heavily, by the telephone, as they have by the telegraph, but I would rather base my case on the broad ground that it is unwise, and contrary to the public interests that Government should undertake business for profit. That is not the true function of Government. I submit that the proposals in this Bill are unwise and impolitic; that they will lead to a heavy loss, and check both private enterprise and scientific progress. The Committee of last year only inquired into one part of the subject, and being therefore convinced that the subject requires further study and inquiry, I propose after the Second Reading to move that it be referred to a Select Committee. No doubt the result will be to postpone the matter for the present year, but it is of comparatively little importance to settle the question this year. What is of import-

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ance is that when we settle it we should do so wisely.

***SIR J. T. WOODHOUSE** (Huddersfield): No one has greater respect for the right hon. Baronet than I have, but I fail to see that there is really very much in his speech that was relevant to the Bill before the House, and I should like to bring the attention of the House back to the Bill which has been moved a second time to-night. The measure is certainly not the least important of the measures introduced into this House by the Government. Indeed, I would venture to say, if I did not see the state of the front Opposition Benches, that it is the most important measure yet introduced by the Government. All classes of the community are deeply concerned in this Bill, because all classes are interested in the development of the trade and commerce of the country; and it is precisely because the aim and object of this Bill, as reflecting the opinion of the Select Committee of which I had the honour to be a member, is to develop that trade and commerce, that I venture humbly to support it. We are every day hearing from chambers of commerce and other bodies that our commerce has to sustain an intense and cumulative competition, and anything that would remove the obstacles to our trade and facilitate its progress surely deserves the earnest consideration and approval of this House. *The Times* not long ago said that the telephone was not only a modern adjunct to our trade and commerce, but a most essential adjunct to our commercial life. The expansion of our telephone system is called for by public opinion and by the necessities of our commercial life. What is it stands in the way? Notwithstanding what has been said by the right hon. Baronet, the present service is insufficient and inadequate. The right hon. Baronet quoted the opinion of Sir William Preece with great approval, but in his official report made in 1896, Sir William Preece stated:

"The British public does not care for the telephone. It is unpopular because it has been badly managed in the past."

I think that is an answer to the right hon. Baronet when he said that there was no ground of complaint regarding insufficient or inadequate service. Sir William Preece says further, that a perfect service and a

moderate and equitable tariff would be as popular here as in Berlin or Stockholm. The high charges exacted is another great obstruction in the way of the expansion of the telephone system. The object of this Bill is to give effect to the recommendations of the Select Committee. The Committee came to two conclusions—one, that the present telephone system could not be of general benefit to the country; and, secondly, that the monopoly of this private trading company could only be remedied by competition. The Committee recommended that the competition should be in two forms—State competition and competition by the local authorities. It did not say that competition was to be entirely by the State or by the local authorities; but it did say that where the State could more efficiently give competition there the State should come in, and that where a local authority could more efficiently give competition there it should come in. It was established before the Committee that the National Telephone Company obtained a monopoly which it was never intended it should obtain; it is a monopoly of an exceptional and aggravated character, which benefited the shareholders, but which has been really most disastrous to the public interests. It is a monopoly which has no analogy in our public service. We have given monopolies to railway companies, gas companies, and water companies, electric lighting companies, and tramway companies, but with regard to all those companies we have imposed stringent restrictions and conditions in the public interest; but we can find none in regard to the monopoly exercised by the National Telephone Company. It is a monopoly unrestricted, for instance, as to its charges, unrestricted as to its dividends, as to the capital it can create, and as to the conditions of issue of that capital, and unrestricted in the method of preferring one trader to another, and the manner in which it will serve one and not another. There were practical illustrations given before the Committee of evils resulting from this unrestricted monopoly, and the result has been to stifle instead of stimulate telephonic enterprise. What are the interests involved? They are threefold: the interests of the public, of the Postmaster-General, and the National Telephone Company. The Postmaster-General has absolutely and exclusively the right to grant licences, and it is his duty to exercise the right in

the interests of the public; and by the licence which was granted to the company in 1884 it was believed that that duty was being exercised in the public interest, and, of course, competition was not to be excluded. At that time there were no less than fourteen competing companies; but, one by one, the National Telephone Company bought them up and absorbed them, and what was a competitive system was turned into a monopoly. Monopoly was never intended for another reason. By the terms of the licence the rights of the Postmaster-General to conduct a telephone service himself were specially reserved, and he also reserved the right to grant similar licences to others. The public never expected that there would be this monopoly, for everyone expected that when the National Telephone Company's patents expired in 1891 competition would increase. I think the right hon. Gentleman has made it very clear in his speech to-night that the result has been to retard the development of telephonic enterprise in the country. I am not going to repeat the figures, but the fact exists that, owing to the National Telephone Company having this monopoly, the United Kingdom is only tenth on the list of European countries with regard to telephonic enterprise. I may point out that even in our own colony of New Zealand we have an example which puts us to shame in this matter. It is a thinly populated country, but it has 5,443 subscribers. In Wellington, there is one to every 37; in Auckland, one to every 33; in Dunedin, one to every 25; and in Christchurch, one to every 18. At the same time there were in the metropolitan district only 10,848 subscribers, or one to every 519 inhabitants. We are put to shame in this matter by Berlin, where, with its million and a-half of inhabitants, there are more subscribers than in the London district, with its six millions of population, and this is principally due to the fact that the rate is there only £7 10s. a year. Such has been the effect of the monopoly of the National Telephone Company. What is the remedy? It is that prescribed by the Bill—competition, the effect of which will be, first, to reduce charges; and, second, to improve the service, which is inadequate at the present time. The issue before the House is whether that remedy, prescribed by the Select Committee and embodied in the Government Bill, is sound, or whether the

remedy suggested by the right hon. Baronet opposite, of nationalisation, should be adopted.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK: My remedy is true competition by companies.

*SIR J. WOODHOUSE: I understand that the position of the right hon. Baronet is true competition, and I gather from the right hon. the Secretary to the Treasury he is prepared to meet the right hon. Baronet to a large extent on that ground. But the first point which the Government and the Committee want to ensure is the breaking down of the monopoly of the National Company, and I am bound to say I have heard very little from the right hon. Baronet as to the breakdown of that monopoly. I say that when we get this Bill we will have reduced charges and a more efficient service. According to the report of Dr. Von Stephan, when the charges in Berlin were reduced from £10 to £7 10s. per annum the effect was, in one year, an increase of 100 per cent. in the local exchanges, 68 per cent in the subscribers, and 118 per cent. in the number of connections. We believe that competition and lower charges would produce the same result in this country, and the only issue between us is as to what the nature of that competition should be. I think that the best competition that could be introduced, at any rate in the case of the great municipalities of the country, is municipal competition. I have good authority for that. Sir Spencer Walpole, the late Secretary to the Post Office, said to the Committee:

"I do not think a Government Department is likely to prove a very active competitor."

The question was put to him:

"Therefore your opinion is that municipal competition would be the more vigorous of the two?"

And he replied:

"I think so; it is obvious that the National Telephone Company are more afraid of municipal competition than of the competition of the Post Office."

I do not think that one who was so long in the service of the Post Office should be regarded as a mean authority.

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Why should we be alarmed, as the right hon. Baronet seems to be, at the introduction of municipal competition? The only argument against it is that it would alarm the merchants and manufacturers of the country. We have heard of that bogey before, when it was proposed to confer power on the municipalities to work tramways, the water supply, electric lighting, gas, etc. There can be no more difficulty in a municipality working telephones locally and within the area prescribed than in their supplying water, gas, electric light, and working tramways, all of which, it is admitted, they have done with great advantage to the community. The right hon. Baronet shakes his head; but let him go to Sheffield and inquire whether the tramways have not been worked by the municipality with great success, or go to Glasgow, where they have reduced the fares to one halfpenny for every man, woman, and child, and made a large profit. Anyone who studies the matter knows that municipalities can do it without being open to the reproach of the right hon. Baronet, that evil results would follow as they did from Tammany in New York. A municipal telephone service has been established within the last few years in Amsterdam and Rotterdam, Holland. In Rotterdam, according to the report for last year, after providing for every expenditure—and they are very liberal to their employees—they made a profit of £5,500, which enables them to pay interest and the sinking fund to pay off the capital in 25 years. With examples of this kind before us I cannot understand the objection to a municipal service. We had before the Committee representatives from Glasgow and Edinburgh—two of the most enlightened municipalities in the country—and they said that their municipalities were prepared to establish municipal exchanges, and that they had already lists of subscribers who were prepared to support them. We have an illustration as to the effect of local exchanges in Guernsey, the only place where the Postmaster-General has in recent years issued a licence as against the National Company. In Jersey there is a population of 54,000, and the National Company charged a rate of £10, which was reduced at the threat of competition to £6 10s. but the ratio of subscribers was only one to 650 of the population. But in Guernsey, under the licence of the Postmaster-General, there was a telephone to one in

every 84 inhabitants, with a cheap system of 30s. subscription and 1d. for every call. That is not imagination, but fact, and an object lesson as to what would take place throughout the country if this Bill were passed into law. I cannot understand the objections to a municipal service raised by hon. Members who profess to be acting solely in the public interest. I can understand the fight which the National Company are making in this matter. There is no doubt they are moving heaven and earth to prevent this Bill being passed into law. It is common knowledge that they are using the great interest which the representatives on their board have in this House, and the enormous interest of their *clientèle* on the Stock Exchange, to prevent this Bill passing into law. I would ask any hon. Member whether he was ever so deluged before with resolutions of the Stock Exchange; but I would ask them to disregard these resolutions and the interests of a private trading company, and regard only those great public interests which we are here to represent, and, at the same time, to do justice to the interests of the existing company which the right hon. Gentleman has under his care. Municipalities, in working a telephonic service, would have sole regard to public interests; they would conduct their operations under the public eye, they would have no paid board of directors, but would have a large staff which could supply a cheaper service and extend the telephone system as the trade of the country demanded it should be extended.

MR. CHARLES MCARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange): The hon. Member who has just sat down, and those who preceded him on the same side, seem to think that there is no alternative but their own pet municipal system, and that all those who oppose the Government scheme are the advocates of the National Telephone Company. I assure the House that that is not the case, and in proof of that I appeal to the unanimous opinion of the community of which I am one of the representatives. Their opinion is perfectly solid on this question. Those who know the Parliamentary representatives of Liverpool know that they have no want of sympathy with the general views of the Government, but I venture to say that there is an equal unanimity on the

part of the people of Liverpool in their objection to the Bill now before the House. That objection does not proceed from one quarter alone, but from the Chamber of Commerce, the mercantile body, the Corporation, the Dock Board, the shipowners, the Steamship Owners' Association, and even from professional bodies. All those sections of the community have joined together in expressing their desire that the Government Bill should be withdrawn, and that the Government should endeavour to formulate some Bill on the principle of nationalisation. Now, some remarks have been made as to the character of the deputation which waited upon the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of the Treasury a few weeks ago, and which I introduced to the right hon. Gentleman, and some endeavours have been made to disparage the composition of the body. I would only say that the deputation was of a most weighty character, and although it has been said that it did not include all the Chambers of Commerce in the country, I believe that no Chamber of Commerce in the country has expressly adopted the views of the Government, except that of Tunbridge Wells, which can hardly be regarded as a great commercial centre. I want to state the reasons why we take the step, with great regret, of opposing this Bill. I am sorry to find that the Secretary to the Treasury has imputed interested motives to the objectors to this Bill, and that line of argument was followed by the hon. Member who has just sat down. But I assure the House that I would not have addressed it on the subject had I had any interest, direct or indirect, in the National Telephone Company. The deputation which waited upon the right hon. Gentleman at their preliminary meeting inquired whether any one of the proposed speakers at the interview had an interest in the Company, and the result was that it was found that not one of them had any such interest. It has been argued by the right hon. Gentleman that this is a movement in behalf of the larger and wealthier traders in the country, in order to keep to themselves the monopoly of the telephone which they have now got. That is altogether a mistake, because wholesale and large traders are not so narrow-minded as not to know that what would benefit small traders would also benefit them. As the right hon. Baronet the Member for London

University has said, all that the Chambers of Commerce have desired is that some steps should be taken to popularise telephones throughout the country. I think we all admit that a man who is an unlimited user of the telephones ought to pay more than the man who is a limited user. The right hon. Gentleman referred to the German system on this subject, but that is a State system. I think we are all agreed that the present system cannot continue. I do not want to make any charge against the National Telephone Company, and I think that the House should not deal unfairly or ungenerously with them, for we have to remember that they were the pioneers of the telephone enterprise in this country. They pushed it, spent large sums of money upon it, and developed it when it was coldly and doubtfully regarded by the Government. The result is that the company have now 883 exchanges and 542 millions of calls per annum. One other reason why the present arrangement cannot continue is that the dual control involved is most unsatisfactory in the working. Although the trunk wire conversations are not more numerous than 4 per cent., great delays now occur, and it is impossible to locate through whose fault these occur—whether it is the fault of the National Telephone Company or of the Government trunk wire service. We should, therefore, consider very seriously and carefully what ought to be the system in the future. Any system, to be a success, must have these essential characteristics—single central control, uniformity of system, communion between the users of the telephone, and control over the way-leaves. Now, the Bill before the House contains two main features. It asks for power to borrow two millions sterling, with which the Post Office should enter into more energetic competition with the National Telephone Company in London. I object to the word competition in the matter of this service, believing, as I do, that it is a mistake altogether. Competition is all very well with respect to trade, but it is not desirable in a national service, where it is essential that there should be complete co-operation between all parts of the undertaking. It is the essence of competition that one system should attempt to displace any others that compete with it, and that is not desirable here. Another objec-

tionable feature of the Government proposal is that it involves a large unnecessary expenditure of capital; for it means two or more systems working side by side where one ought to suffice; two exchanges for one, and two sets of wires along the streets instead of one. The second section of the Bill is even more objectionable, where it proposes the municipalisation of the telephone. At present the United Kingdom is mapped out into 474 telephone areas, of which 336 are in England, 86 in Scotland, and 52 in Ireland. If the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman were carried out, the result would be that each of these areas would be a separate authority, with separate systems, competing with each other. The general effect would be a multiplicity of systems which would involve the business of the country in the utmost confusion. But that is not all. Each of these areas includes a large number of local authorities. Take Liverpool, for instance. In that area there are 158 square miles, partly in Lancashire and partly in Cheshire. In it are included the boroughs of Liverpool, Birkenhead, and Bootle, 17 urban districts, and two county councils. If this Bill is adopted by each of these local authorities, and if each sets up its own separate telephone system, confined to its own particular area, how can inter-communication be arranged between them all? Junction wires would be required; and at whose expense are these to be provided? The adoption of the Bill in this respect would be going back, not to the days of the Heptarchy, but to the days of village communities—I might even say, to the Patriarchal age; and confusion would be worse confounded. May I look at the matter for a moment from a municipal point of view? There are already 114 municipal boroughs in England, the local authorities of which have entered into agreements with the National Telephone Company, 13 in Scotland and 103 urban districts in Ireland. These agreements have to a large extent obviated the objections made to the present system, for they require the company to provide a twin wire system, to lay the wires underground on a payment of, I think, 5s to the local authority for each wire, not to increase the present charges, and to give the service to every citizen who will pay the charges and enter into an agreement with the company. I submit to the House

Mr. Charles McArthur.

that the true remedy for the settlement of the question is the nationalisation of the telephones. An hon. Member has said that the Government would have to buy the "water" and pay an exaggerated price for the undertaking of the National Telephone Company. Surely, if no agreement has been come to, have we any reason to doubt but that a fair result would be arrived at by arbitration? The labour difficulty has been mentioned, and it has been said that the Post Office employs 160,000 persons, and that it is undesirable to increase the staff. I will put before the House a practical suggestion—that the Government should take over the control of the telephones, leaving the company to work out their system until 1911, the company, charging sufficient to pay interest and provide a sinking fund. Now, Sir, I support the suggestion of the right hon. Baronet the Member for London University that the Bill should be referred to a Select Committee. It may be said that we have had a Select Committee already. But it has never considered the question of nationalisation, and therefore the inquiry has been incomplete. Moreover, since this Bill has been introduced an important change has been made which demands serious consideration. There is no occasion for urgency; it is of far more importance that we should not take a false step. Having regard to all the circumstances, we had better delay our imprimatur to the Bill until the whole of the various points I have mentioned have been thoroughly dealt with.

*MR. FAITHFUL BEGG (Glasgow, St. Rollox): Before asking the House to listen to one or two observations upon the main question, I should like to refer in a single sentence to what has already assumed the aspect of a personal question. My right hon. friend, in making his motion this evening, made reference in his speech to stockbrokers, and on the other side of the House, in a speech which we have just listened to, a very pointed allusion was made to the effect that stockbrokers and the Stock Exchange had had a great deal to do with this question. Well, Sir, for my sins I have had to follow the profession of a stockbroker, but I should like to ask the House to accept my assurance that in any line I have taken with regard to this Bill I have been actuated purely by public motives. If I were to look at this matter

from a personal point of view I could see in the proposal of my right hon. friend this evening—a proposal for the establishment of an unlimited number of companies—a bountiful field for my own energies in relation to my own particular business. But that consideration does not enter into my mind in the slightest in considering this problem. If I may be allowed at this somewhat late hour, I should like to offer a few remarks upon the general question. This Bill, which has been brought in by my right hon. friend the Secretary for the Treasury, proposes to carry out the recommendation of a Committee of this House which examined the subject and reported last year. I need not refer to the provisions of the measure itself or to the Treasury Minute which has been published in explanation of the Bill, beyond saying that it is necessary, in order to understand the precise proposals of the Government, to read these two documents together and to treat them as a whole. That is the only way in which a proper understanding of the question as it presents itself to this House can be come to. Well, Sir, the first remark which I desire to make is that the Bill is not justified by the Report of the Select Committee. That criticism has already been made this evening by an hon. Baronet opposite (Sir James Joicey) who had the privilege of sitting upon that Committee; but what I wish to point out also is that the Bill goes further than the reference. The reference to that Committee was substantial and precise. It was to inquire and report whether the telephone service was, or was calculated to become, of such general benefit as to justify its being undertaken by municipal and other local authorities. The reference is confined exclusively to the question of whether or not a municipality should be permitted to take up this enterprise. In the Report we find that the Committee travelled outside that reference, and in their Report they recommend that competition should take place, either by the Post Office—by the Post Office preferentially—or by municipalities; and they go on to say that a really efficient Post Office service is the best means of obtaining competition. But this Bill does not provide for an efficient Post Office competition. This Bill provides that two millions of money should be drawn from the general taxation of the country in order that that money may be

spent in the area of London. I very much doubt whether, when that comes to be understood, the people throughout the country generally will be satisfied that such a large sum of money should be drawn from such a source and should be devoted exclusively to the development of the telephone service in London. The metropolis, of course, is an exceedingly important place as well as being the capital, but, after all, it was not, I venture to think, in the minds of the Committee when they made these recommendations, the only place where an efficient postal service should be inaugurated. Well, Sir, there is another point which I desire to state in connection with this matter. In the Report of the Committee we do not find a Report which gives to the House a complete indication of the evidence which the Committee had before them when they considered the question. For instance, one omission in this Report I should like to draw special attention to. It has been referred to previously this evening, but it will bear pointing out once more. In the evidence—I have not the evidence here, and it would not be fair to trouble the House with it—most important witnesses were called on behalf of the Government. Those witnesses were high officials of the Post Office, and gentlemen who had been accustomed for years to handle the telephone question in all its phases. What was the evidence those gentlemen gave? The evidence those gentlemen gave was that in their judgment the telephone was a national service. It was a service which should be undertaken by the Government, and they even went so far as to say that it had always been the intention of the Department that it should ultimately become a Government service. Well, Sir, I say that that evidence was very important evidence, and I complain that whereas matters have been brought into this Report—I am making no reflection on the Committee—which have not been points upon which reference was made to the Committee, we are not provided with guidance where we had reason to expect it, but have been left to wade through the very voluminous evidence to which I have referred till we come to the evidence of the Government's own witnesses, in order to discover that they were most emphatic in the view that the telephone service

should be a national service. Well, Sir, we have had to-night from the right hon. Gentleman a further proposal which was not contained in the reference to the Committee, and which was not contained in the recommendations of the Committee, and that proposal is that there should be granted an indefinite number of licences to private companies to undertake this business. Well, before I speak of the question of inaugurating these various and conflicting services, I should like to say one word with regard to the opposition which has been offered since this Bill was brought into this House. I will not go in detail into the arguments as to the validity or importance of that opposition. I venture, however, to say, that no more remarkable series of resolutions have ever been passed with regard to any measure having a commercial bearing than the series of resolutions which have been passed by Chambers of Commerce, by Stock Exchanges, by Corporations, and by other large bodies interested in commerce and finance throughout the country. There is one point, however, I desire to note. My right hon. friend said that practically the only corporations which had moved in this matter were the Corporations of Liverpool and Nottingham. But I find that there have been a large number of resolutions from other corporate bodies, and in particular I find a resolution which was passed by the Council of the Association of Municipal Corporations on 12th January, 1899. This resolution was to the effect that the Municipal Corporations Association strongly protested against the powers of the National Telephone Company being extended, and against any Act being passed which might tend to delay or interfere with the Government undertaking the telephone service of the country. Now, Sir, the fact that this Bill has been brought in cannot alter that opinion. But other bodies have taken the same view. I find that at a meeting of the Convention of Scotch Burghs, in which all burghs of importance are represented, a resolution was passed urging the Government to undertake the management and control of all telephones throughout the country, and memorialising the Government accordingly. I know also that individual corporations in Scotland have done the same. I do not profess to have followed the movement

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so closely in England as I have done in regard to Scotland, but I think it is minimising the importance of the position as regards corporations to say that practically only Liverpool and Nottingham Corporations have acted in the matter. But, Sir, the main question to be considered is the question of how far the Government scheme meets the difficulties of the case. I should like to say as to that that nothing could exceed, to my mind, the absolute absurdity of contemplating that there should be in large centres, in existence at the same time and competing with each other, a series of different bodies endeavouring to serve the public in the matter of telephones. It appears to me that there is a root fallacy lying at the bottom of the whole question, and that fallacy is to assume that when you have provided a man with a telephone you have given him telephonic communication. You have done nothing of the kind. What a man wants, if he wishes to have the telephone, is to be put into communication with all those who also have the telephone, in order to carry out his business without the loss of time involved in calling personally. I ask the House to consider what will be the result of the competing systems established under the Bill. The immediate effect will be to cause great expense, owing to the competition to obtain the services of the limited number of skilled operators and experts available. The proper telephone service in the future must be a Government service under the control of some central authority like the Post Office, established on a uniform system, and made as cheap as possible in the interest of the public. But the proposal of the Government is no remedy for the state of affairs which exists, while the whole policy embodied in the Bill is a new departure on behalf of the Government. There is no way out of the muddle into which the Government has got except by a policy of purchase.

*MR. W. F. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby) [speaking amid cries of "Divide!"] : It is all very well for hon. Members to wish to divide the House at this stage, but this is a question of such very great magnitude that it ought not to be hurriedly passed over. The question is whether our telephone system is in future to be worked by private companies, by

municipal bodies, or by the State. I am one of those who believe that the private companies are properly ruled out of the question, inasmuch as we cannot expect the streets of a municipality can be placed at their disposal ; but I am also of opinion that municipal systems are out of the question. I think my hon. friend and colleague in the representation of Liverpool, who has just spoken, has shown clearly to everybody who has been lucky enough to hear his very lucid and short speech, that a municipal system in a large area with separate exchanges is perfectly unworkable. I am quite certain that the business community which I have the honour to represent would repudiate such a proposal. A previous speaker has alleged our action is taken merely in the interests of the National Telephone Company. With the permission of the House I will read one or two lines of the resolution passed by the Liverpool City Council on the 6th of February. It is to the effect that the Council strongly protest against the powers of the National Telephone Company being extended, or to anything being done which would tend to delay or interfere with the Government undertaking the telephone service. I submit that the action of Liverpool ———

It being midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

SERVICE FRANCHISE BILL.

As amended, further considered.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 10, to leave out from the word 'tenant,' to the word 'notwithstanding,' in line 11."—(*Sir Charles Dilke.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Bill."

Debate arising, and it being after midnight, and objection being taken to further proceeding, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow,

COUNTY COURT OFFICERS IN
IRELAND (CLERICAL ASSISTANCE).

Return presented, -- relative thereto
[ordered 20th June; *Mr. Hanbury*], to
lie upon the Table.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

On the motion for the adjournment of
the House,

MR. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.):
May I ask the First Lord of the Treasury
whether the Barracks Loan Fund Bill is
the first Order for to-morrow; and whether
the Under-Secretary for War is going to
make a statement in moving the necessary
resolution.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: My hon. friend,
the Under-Secretary for War will make
a statement at 12 o'clock to-morrow in
introducing the Barracks Loan Fund Bill,
which will be the first Order of the Day.
The second Order will be the continuation
of the Debate on the Second Reading of
the Telephones Bill.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middles-
brough): I should like to ask the First
Lord of the Treasury whether it is the
intention of the Government to proceed
with the Metropolitan Streets Regulation
Bill?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Certainly not
at present, Sir.

Adjourned at 10 minutes after
Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 21st June, 1899.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

WISHAW WATER BILL. [Lords.]

Read the third time, and passed, without amendment.

COLONIAL AND FOREIGN BANKS GUARANTEE FUND BILL. [Lords.]

As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

INVERNESS HARBOUR BILL. [Lords.]

As amended, to be considered upon Tuesday next.

CLYDE NAVIGATION BILL. [Lords.]

Read a second time, and committed.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (HOUSING OF WORKING CLASSES) (No. 2) BILL.

Read the third time, and passed.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (GAS) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 9) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 11) BILL.

PIER AND HARBOUR PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL.

As amended, considered; to be read the third time To-morrow.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP L).

Sir William Houldsworth reported from the Committee on Group L of Private Bills, That the parties opposing the Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 10) Bill [Bradford (Yorks) Order] had stated that the evidence of Frederic Steevens, Acting Town Clerk, of Bradford, was essential to their case; and, it having been proved that his attendance could not be procured without the intervention of the House, he had been instructed to move that the said Frederic Steevens do attend the said Committee upon Monday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

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Ordered, That Frederic Steevens do attend the said Committee on Group L of Private Bills upon Monday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 6) BILL.

Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill, as amended, to be considered To-morrow.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP L).

Sir William Houldsworth reported from the Committee on Group L of Private Bills; That, for the convenience of the Committee, they had adjourned till Monday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

BOROUGH FUNDS ACT, 1872.

Petitions for Alteration of Law, from Swinton and Pendlebury, and Colchester—to lie upon the Table.

GROUND RENTS (TAXATION BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES).

Petitions in favour, from Pontypool and Glasgow—to lie upon the Table.

POOR LAW AMENDMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1845.

Petition from Colmonell, for Alteration of Law—to lie upon the Table.

PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Peebles and Cupar—to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF FOOD AND DRUGS BILL.

Petition from Edinburgh against—to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Flecknoe Hill, Blisworth, and Gee Cross—to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented of Twenty-sixth Annual Report by the Accountant for Scotland to

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the Scotch Education Department [by Command]—to lie upon the Table.

LOSS OF LIFE AT SEA.

Copy ordered “of Return of Loss of Life at Sea for the year 1898 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, C. 285.”—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Copy presented accordingly ; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 236.]

MILITARY WORKS (MONEY).

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): Any resolution such as I rise to move must necessarily involve a great number of geographical references and a complicated array of figures. It will be my duty to give these in minute detail should the Committee pass this resolution and authorise the introduction of the Bill. But at this stage I think it will be more to the convenience of hon. Members, who have not yet the schedule of the Bill, if I seek rather to explain the general nature of the proposal and state the principle upon which it is based. I think I can best indicate the nature of the proposal by saying that the Bill, if accepted, will be, to all intents and purposes, a continuation of the Military Loans Act of the year 1897. That is to say, it will provide comparatively large sums both for defence works and for barracks, and a smaller sum for rifle ranges. Having said that, I should like at the outset to guard against a possible misconception. I desire to remove the suspicion, if it lurks in the mind of any hon. Member, that this is but another attempt to muddle on, in a hand-to-mouth manner, “without fear and without a plan.” There have been a good many military loans since the Crimea. There have been Lord Palmerston’s Defence Loan of 1860, the Military Forces Localisation Act of 1872, the Imperial Defences Act of 1888, the Barracks Loan Act of 1890, and the Military Works Loan of 1897. I have enumerated these loans so that I may express the hope that they will absolve me from the necessity of re-arguing once more the question of loan *versus* Estimates in respect of defence

works and barracks. I think the question as to the proper method to be adopted may now be held to have been decided. My right hon. friend the present Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, when he introduced the Act of 1897, pointed out that the practice of proceeding by loan has obtained for 50 years, and if any hon. Member wishes to see the arguments by which a seal was set upon that practice he will find them in the Report of Lord Randolph Churchill’s Select Committee on the Army, 1888-89. It is not too much to say that the general plan of all subsequent military loan legislation may be traced to the facts elicited by Lord Randolph Churchill’s examination of Sir Lothian Nicholson, who at that time was Inspector-General of Fortifications. That Committee led up to the Barracks Act of 1890, and two important improvements were introduced into the Military Works Loan Act of 1897. In the first place, armaments or guns—which had been included in the Imperial Defences Act—were excluded in the Act of 1897 ; and, in the second place, a provision was included for the repayment of the loan by annual instalments within a certain period of years. We shall follow both these precedents in the Bill which we intend to introduce. Lord Lansdowne and his military advisers in framing these proposals have been guided by two considerations. They have been unwilling to ask for more money than the experience of the past shows can be spent within a reasonable time. In the second place—I am speaking now only from the War Office point of view—they are unwilling to ask for so large a sum without giving some guarantee that the services to be defrayed by those moneys form an integral part of a scheme which has been carefully considered in all its bearings. The best way to give such a guarantee is to work out your complete scheme in the first instance, and then to select from it those services which appear to be most urgent. I think that is a sound plan. In the recently published “Life and Letters of Sir Robert Peel,” it is recorded to his credit that every measure he introduced, however much curtailed by the exigencies of the moment, was based upon general and scientific principles. The War Office have endeavoured in this measure to follow that example. I will now proceed to the defence services

which are contemplated in this Bill. Let me say that they do not embody any new departure of policy. Much has been said in recent months about the extent of our Imperial obligations, and the wisdom or unwisdom of extending them. But what we are asking for now will commit us to no more than is immediately urgent and permanently useful, if we are to achieve ends upon which I really believe all sections of opinion in this House have been for some years in agreement. We all agree that in respect of defence we must consider the Empire as a whole. We all agree, I think, that the burden of defending our territories and of protecting our commerce from destruction must, in any future which we can now foresee, rest to a very large extent upon the mother country; and we all, I think, agree that the system of Imperial defence to be pursued must be based upon the maintenance of our sea supremacy, although carried out by the co-operation of the two Services. This theory was so ably and succinctly stated in a passage quoted from a memorandum by the Duke of Devonshire in a speech which he delivered on 3rd December 1896, that it may be convenient if I read that passage once more to the Committee, though I am sure it is in the minds of many of the experts whom I see assembled here today. It reads as follows:

"The maintenance of sea supremacy has been assumed as the basis of the system of Imperial defence against attack from over the sea. This is the determining factor in shaping the whole defensive policy of the Empire, and is fully recognised by the Admiralty, who have accepted the responsibility of protecting all British territory abroad against organised invasion from the sea. To fulfil this great charge they claim the absolute power of disposing of their forces in the manner they consider most certain to secure success, and object to limit the action of any part of them to the immediate neighbourhood of places which they consider may be more effectively protected by operations at a distance."

That statement attracted a good deal of attention at the time, and the word "abroad," in the phrase "protecting all British territory abroad," provoked some controversy. But the inclusion of the word is easily explained. It was included because the memorandum in question and the speech of the Duke of Devonshire were both specifically directed to Australasian defences. The general principle enunciated applies, also to the

defence of these islands. The Navy does undertake, for the whole Empire, to give, not indeed absolute security at any price, however extravagant, against all risks, however remote, but reasonable security against probable combinations. To do this the Navy claims an absolute discretion in the disposal of its forces. Granting this, the Navy must, in the first place, have dock-yards and principal bases which must be, in a sense, fortresses, that is to say, stations with garrisons and guns sufficient to protect them independently of the Navy. Otherwise the Navy cannot have the liberty which it claims. A fleet which is to, engage in distant strategic operations requires a base just as much as does an army. And, just as an army requires lines of communication, so does a fleet require secondary bases and coaling stations. The Army Estimates or the Army loans provide the guns, the defences, and garrisons for all these stations, the character of which I have indicated. Again it follows from the passage which I have quoted that our commerce needs strategic harbours of refuge at which, like a boy playing rounders, it may count on security before making a final dash for home. Its home—the commercial port, that is to say, for which it is bound—must also have some measure of protection, sufficient to resist, not an armoured squadron, but the attack of one or two cruisers which may have escaped the vigilance of the Fleet, or which the Fleet, being engaged in operations of far greater gravity, may have deliberately left out of account. It would be difficult to exaggerate the gravity of the issues involved. Along many trade routes, from Canada, from the United States, from South America, from the Cape, from the Canal, from the Mediterranean ports and from Spain, the great bulk of the sea-borne commerce of the Empire—some £500,000,000 out of, say, £750,000,000 in 1897—converges into a band spreading from Cape Clear to Ushant. The Emperor Caligula is said to have expressed a wish that the Roman people had but one neck, so that he might sever it at a blow. The commerce of the Empire has practically but one neck. But, happily, the blow by which it might be threatened can, under the system of Imperial defence, be parried at distances of hundreds or even thousands of miles. To grant the mobility needed for that system, the Navy requires principal bases, secondary bases, and coaling

stations; and to ensure that the Navy can, at all times, be able to avail itself of that mobility we need for our commerce these harbours of refuge and commercial ports. For each one of these stations we require a certain number of guns, each of them of a certain size; and these guns, in turn, require certain defence works upon which they may be mounted. It is to provide these defence works, upon which the guns are to be mounted, that Defence Loans have been passed by this House. The loan of 1897—called the Military Works Act—provided £1,120,000, of which £450,072 has already been spent. But both the portion of that money which has been expended and the portion which is still unexpended are allocated, in the main, to the provision only of minor and medium armaments. The question of heavy armaments was left over. That question involves two things—the substitution of modern breech-loaders for muzzle-loaders, and the provision of the guns which are required at stations which have hitherto been unprovided. When I introduced the Army Estimates this year I told the House that a conference had sat and drawn up a scheme dealing with the armaments necessary for this scheme of Imperial defence, and with the number and size of the guns needed at all points of the Empire. That scheme has been drawn up by Sir Henry Brackenbury, Sir Richard Harrison, and Rear-Admiral Beaumont, and although the document naturally is of a confidential character, it is of the greatest authority. But if we are from year to year upon these Estimates to make provision for these guns which are asked for in the report of that conference, it is evident that we must provide by loan the defence works upon which they are to be mounted. To do this, in the opinion of the Joint Conference—I am now speaking purely from a Departmental point of view—to carry out completely all the works needed for all the guns which this high authority holds are needed, would require the sum of £1,306,000; but, as I said before, under this Bill we are only asking for such sums of money as can—in the opinion of those best able to form a correct judgment—be conveniently spent within a reasonable period of four or five years. That sum in respect of defence works in this Bill has been fixed at £1,000,000. It has not been customary to give—and there are

obvious objections to giving—the number and size of these guns, and an objection equally great would apply to describing the size and cost of the defence works for these guns at particular stations, because if such information were given it would not take a very clever military man to work out the size of the guns to be mounted. But to illustrate this system of defence I have indicated the categories of these stations and the purposes for which they exist, and I have cited the high authority for the gun scheme which determines the scope and size of our defence works. I do not think that I can say more upon the subject of defence works, which has necessarily to be treated in a somewhat cautious manner. I come now to the barracks portion of our scheme. The Committee will remember that during the last three years we have increased the establishment of the Army by 25,000 men. If I were only concerned to-day with the barrack portion of the scheme, I should not add another word to that statement, for having got the men we must give them a roof and four walls. But there is a school of critics ably represented in this House who, whilst they smile approval upon sums, however large, for the Navy, or for military services obviously connected with the Navy, strongly disapprove of an increased expenditure, however small, upon military service not so obviously connected. It is necessary, therefore, to say that although we are asking for a considerable sum of money for barracks we have no intention of increasing the Army in order to protect these islands from invasion by soldiers instead of by ships. May I remind the Committee that, apart from military expeditions and occupations, the Army in the normal discharge of its functions sends some 22,000 men over sea every year to feed and relieve garrisons abroad. These men must be found for the regions which we undertake to police in all quarters of the globe. It may be objected by the school of critics to which I have referred that this explanation does not cover the maintenance of three army corps for home defence in England, Ireland, and Scotland. I am quite prepared to admit that this home Army organised into three army corps constitutes an apparent exception from our system of Imperial defence, but the exception is only apparent, analagous in kind, though

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not in degree, to the other apparent exception of light defences for commercial ports. The home Army and the light defences of commercial ports are neither of them designed to meet the total strength which could be brought to their attack, supposing by some great calamity we lost the supremacy of the sea. But if we grant to a commercial port or to the United Kingdom a defence slight by comparison with that total strength, you can achieve three very desirable objects. In the first place you discourage any attempt to raid. If a commercial port has a few guns, a hostile cruiser will think twice before attacking it; so also if the United Kingdom has three army corps, a hostile Power will think twice before attempting a *coup de main* with 100,000 or 150,000 men. In the second place, you confirm to the Fleet the mobility which it demands; and in the third place, you do carefully and cheaply in time of peace that which you would most certainly be driven into doing hurriedly and extravagantly in time of war. You must in any case have at home a force sufficient to provide reliefs for the posts which must in any case be occupied abroad. It is, therefore, prudent and economic so to organise these reliefs as to give the mobility which the Navy demands, and to put yourself in a position to follow up a naval victory by a counter-attack with two army corps. Having added 25,000 to the establishment of the Army, there is, I submit, an overwhelming case for providing barracks abroad at the posts which must be occupied, and for providing barracks at home, distributed in so far as may be possible with a view to organising the feeders of these foreign stations into bodies efficiently trained for the double purpose of discouraging or withstanding a *coup de main*, and of following up a naval victory. We come, then, to Parliament for a new loan in respect of barracks somewhat earlier than would otherwise have been necessary, because of the additions which have been voted to the Army. But we come to Parliament also with the assurance that the fulfilment of these urgent services of mere accommodation for increases are part of a scheme carefully considered to give effect to the views which I have indicated. It will be for our successors to complete that scheme, or to leave it incomplete as they may think

best. The Bill to be introduced, if this Resolution be accepted, will in no way bind or commit our successors in any way, for in the Bill no service will be undertaken which cannot be completed under the total named in the schedule. But, although we leave it entirely to the judgment and discretion of our successors, we shall at least have thrown no impediment in their path if they should, as I earnestly hope they may, see fit to pursue it towards the ideals which are and must be the evident goal of any Government charged with providing barracks for the Army. What are those ideals? Assuming that you must have, so to say, a "house" for your Army, the ideals are two—first, to have a good house, and second, to have a house in the right place. These two ideals have been pursued in the past by successive Governments who have introduced Barrack Acts. But those who pursued them have found themselves confronted by the two difficulties which beset their realisation. They wanted a good house, and much for their accommodation was bad. Barracks built 70 or 100 years ago were obsolete in respect to the standard of comfort of the classes from which you seek to draw recruits, and many of them were insanitary. They were also in the wrong place—built in the heart of a town with a view to riots or pageants rather than to drawing the units of larger bodies together within reasonable access of the ground on which they might be trained. Under the Acts of 1890 and 1897 a very great deal has been done to abolish what may be called death-traps; something has been done towards raising the standard of comfort in our barracks, and a little, but not very much, has been done towards effecting concentration; so that a great deal remains to do. And now, having to provide accommodation for 25,000 men, an excellent opportunity presented itself to our military advisers for taking a forward step towards the two ideals I have mentioned, and they have not been slow to seize it. They have made a careful examination of every barrack in the three kingdoms, and have sat in judgment on them. They have condemned absolutely the few remaining barracks unfitted for human habitation—that may be too strong an expression—but certainly unfitted for the soldiers of this country. These will be abolished. In the second place, they have made a

list of the barracks so ancient and misplaced as to render any considerable expenditure upon them uneconomic. These will be maintained temporarily, but no more will be spent on them than may be necessary to keep out the weather, in order that they may afford temporary shelter for our troops until better accommodation can be provided; and, in the third place, they have made a list of old barracks to be added to and of new barracks to be built, which, when completed, will give our home Army decent accommodation, distributed with a due regard to the exigencies of organisation. In fact, they have worked out a complete scheme, but a scheme which would require £5,254,000—more, that is to say, judging from the experience of the past, than could be spent conveniently and economically within a period of four or five years. Under the Bill to be introduced we ask for £2,770,000 in respect of barracks. Of that sum £675,000 will be expended at stations for which moneys were taken under the Act of 1897, and where a great deal has already been done, and £2,095,000 at other stations. I will indicate now, without going into detail, the classification of stations to which these moneys are allocated. The nature of the additions to the Army very largely determined the choice of stations at which we intend to build. The Committee will remember that these additions are as follows: 900 to cavalry, 16 batteries of field artillery, 11 companies garrison artillery, 2 battalions of Guards, 7 battalions of line, and eighty men added to each home battalion; 1 dépôt and 8 companies of the Army Service Corps, 1 battalion West India Regiment, 1 battalion West African, 1 battalion Central African, and 1 Chinese battalion. The bulk, by far the larger part, of the sum we ask for now will go to providing accommodation for these additions. £1,600,000 will be spent on barracks on Salisbury Plain, and I believe by doing that we shall be giving the taxpayer value for his money which has already been spent on that most desirable acquisition. On Salisbury Plain we have a free hand, and we can comparatively cheaply do much to raise the standard of comfort of our soldiers and also to effect scientific concentration. It will be impossible for me without charts and elevations to explain to the Committee the exact type of the

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barracks that will be built, but as the subject has excited a good deal of interest, I may say that we contemplate giving these new barracks dining-halls. Anyone who has gone round a barrack after a long route march or a field day, and has experienced the mingled odour of pipeclay, wet clothes, and Irish stew, will realise that this will be a very considerable improvement. No one likes to sit down to the principal meal of the day in close proximity to dirty boots and wet clothes. There will in all probability be a dining-hall for every two companies. The blocks will be for four companies, and between them they will have two dining-halls, a cook-house, and a drying-room. The question of cubicles has also excited a good deal of interest, but as at present advised the Secretary of State is not prepared to introduce that reform; but it is being considered, and nothing will be done in building to render it difficult or impossible of adoption in after years. The barracks at Salisbury Plain will be built for seven battalions of infantry and six batteries of field artillery.

MR. WARNER (Lichfield): Any cavalry?

*MR. WYNDHAM: No, Sir, no cavalry. I think the hon. Member will see that the argument for augmentation applies more immediately to infantry and artillery than to cavalry, because we have only added a few men to the cavalry, and the Bill is based upon the urgent necessity of building accommodation for the additions to the Army. The next item is £160,000 for additions to the dépôts of regiments to which new battalions have been added. It is quite clear that when we add two battalions to the Guards, and one battalion each to the Lancashire Fusiliers, the Royal Warwickshire Regiment, and the Royal Fusiliers, we must expand the depôts of the regiments in proportion to the expansion of their establishments. Then we are taking £70,000 to build barracks for four companies of garrison artillery and another battery of field artillery. £90,000 is to be spent at different stations in order to make the additions necessary to take in the 80 men added to each of the home battalions; and £170,000 on six other important stations to carry out urgent and necessary services, such as to bring together the scattered squadrons.

of a cavalry regiment, as at Cork, or to rebuild barracks which are 100 years old, and which are falling down altogether, as at Windsor. We are spending £230,000 to carry on the work which has been already very largely advanced at the camps at Aldershot, Colchester, Shorncliffe, and Curragh. So much for barracks at home. Abroad we propose to spend £50,000 on Gibraltar, mainly for a hospital; £40,000 at Halifax, where the barracks are a hundred years old; and £120,000 at Malta, for hospitals and also for the reconstruction of parts of the barracks at that station. We propose £130,000 for Wei-hai-wei, and I may, perhaps, give the garrison which is to be stationed there. It will consist of one company of British garrison artillery, one company of Chinese garrison artillery, two companies of British and six companies of Chinese infantry, and the necessary contingent of Royal Engineers and departmental staffs. We are taking £90,000 to be distributed between Bermuda, Jamaica, Mauritius, and St. Helena. And if we add to these figures £20,000 for transport it will give the total of £2,770,000 that we are taking for barracks under this Bill. That brings me to the third head—rifle ranges. For that we are only taking £40,000. The Secretary of State for War is fully conscious of the great difficulties which the Volunteer corps have had to face owing to the distribution of the Lee-Metford rifle, which has led to the closing of so many ranges. In the past no Government has made itself responsible for giving ranges to the Volunteers. Indeed, there were so many other services of a more urgent nature to be met, that it would have been impossible to undertake that additional obligation. Hon. Members may say that £40,000 is such a very small sum that it would prove of very little use to provide ranges. Without pledging myself to the plan which now holds the field, I think I may point out without any indiscretion that such a sum could be made to go a very long way if it were wisely administered. Supposing we were only to take the areas within which there is no range accommodation or very small range accommodation, but within which there are a great number of corps—and there are such areas in the United Kingdom—and if we were to say that if these corps were to combine together to pay a large percentage of the cost of the range the

War Office would find the rest, then I think it would be quite possible to give to the areas most needing Volunteer rifle ranges a considerable addition to the number existing. There remains only the sum of £190,000 for staff and contingencies, and that applies not only to the barracks part of the loan, but also to the defence part. Including the £1,000,000 for defence works, the total sum asked for would be four millions. I thank the Committee for the attention with which they have listened to a dry statement, chiefly concerned with the principles on which the measure is based. But I assure them that if they pass this Resolution, at a later and more convenient stage I shall be ready to give very full information on the allocation of the sums, and on the nature of the services which they are intended to defray. I beg to move.

Motion made, and Question proposed :

“That it is expedient to authorise the issue out of the Consolidated Fund, in addition to the sum authorised by the Military Works Loan Act of 1897, a such further sum not exceeding on the whole £4,000,000, which may be required for defence works, barracks, rifle ranges, and staff and contingencies.”—(*Mr. Wyndham.*)

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): I think the Committee will be generally agreed that this is not a very convenient time for entering on a discussion of the policy laid before the Committee by the hon. Gentleman in his speech, which I am sure was perfectly clear and extremely interesting. We are under this disadvantage in cases of this sort, that we are dealing with a Resolution which will bind our future proceedings on this Bill, which, nevertheless, is only in manuscript, and the terms of which are not before the House. That is a disadvantage not due to the hon. Gentleman, but to the rules of procedure of the House. In the few observations I have to make on the statement of the hon. Gentleman, I wish, first of all, to take note of what appears to me the rather too light assumption that the policy of borrowing, as a matter of course, for works of this sort, has been accepted by the House and by both Parties. I hardly think that is a correct statement of the views on this side of the House, at all events; and I venture to say that entire liberty will have to be reserved for discussion on that point. It

will not be forgotten on this side that this proposal is a proposal to add, for the time being, to the National Debt, and that it is made in a year in which the normal provision for meeting the Debt has been deliberately reduced by the action of the Government. For my own part, while I think that no recourse to loans should ever be had unless the work is both urgent and permanent—and I do not deny that these works may not be both urgent and permanent—I also think that no recourse should be made to loaning unless there is an absolute financial necessity. If there is an absolute financial necessity in this case, it has been brought about by the policy which the Government have pursued during the last four years. The hon. Gentleman said that the Empire is to be defended as a whole. To that general principle I say no exception can very well be taken. But there is a corollary to that which many of us must have in mind. If the Empire is to be defended as a whole, then the expense of this universal Imperial defence ought not to be borne entirely by the home country. It ought to rest, in part, on an adequate contribution by those outlying parts of the Empire whose defence we have hitherto taken upon ourselves alone. Now, the hon. Gentleman spoke of the maximum sum which he is going to ask us to authorise as something like four millions, and he justified that figure upon this ground, that it was, roughly speaking, the amount which might fairly be anticipated to be spent within a reasonable period. Well, I may be pardoned if I allude to the total failure of the official anticipations of the expenditure under the Naval Works Act. I hope that the anticipations in regard to the military works will be better realised than those in regard to the naval works. But what is a reasonable period? The hon. Gentleman alluded to precedents, but he made no allusion to the naval works in their various stages. The reasonable period which the House originally accepted as the period for the continuance of the Naval Works Bill—which is on all fours with this Bill—was not the period of two or three years, but the period of a year. The policy recommended to and accepted by the House was that the authority should be renewed by annual Bills, so that the House should not lose control over the expenditure for a longer

period than it does over the Estimates. I wish that that principle had been kept in view by the Government in the proposals they have made to-day; and we, on this side of the House, consider we are within our rights in reserving what criticism we may make on that point. But the most serious criticism that I want to make at this stage, to the hon. Gentleman and the Government, has regard to the schedule of the Bill. I hope this Bill is not in print, or if it is, I hope that it is in a form very different from the Military Works Loan Bill of 1897. If it is not in print, the hon. Gentleman has time to make the desired alterations from what I am going to say. It is almost necessary to have a copy of the Statutes of 1897 in hand, and I want the hon. Gentleman to compare the Military Works Loan Bill of 1897 and the Naval Works Loan Act of 1897 in regard to the schedule. The schedule of the Military Works Bill is of the most meagre possible kind. It contains a bare and bald enumeration of the particulars under the four heads which the hon. Gentleman has followed to-day—namely, 1st Defence Works, 2nd Barracks, 3rd Rifle Ranges, and 4th Staff and contingencies. But if you turn to the corresponding Naval Works Act for the same year you will find a most complete and detailed enumeration, under corresponding heads—every individual work of importance that the Government undertook to look after under that Act—Gibraltar, Portland, Dover, &c. I won't go through the detailed enumeration, but there are 20 items or more; whereas in the Military Works Act there is none. And here is a parallelism precisely in point. A large portion of the sum asked for under the Naval Works Act of 1897 dealt with naval barracks. That was one of the principal items, and all the naval items were specified in the schedule, such as Chatham, Sheerness, Portsmouth, and so on, with every particular work of importance. Not only that, but the total sum expected to be spent, not merely under the then existing Naval Works Act, but altogether under the scheme of the Government—that also was contained in separate items in the Bill. You know exactly where you are with regard to that year, you know what has been spent in the past, and what it is you intend to spend in the coming year, and you know the period within which the Government intends to

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bring the work to its completion. The schedule of the Naval Works Act is as complete as you would expect to find it in the Estimates laid before Parliament when this expenditure is expected to be required. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will give some consideration to the points that I have urged upon the Government, and will say that we shall have as full a schedule in this Bill as we have in the Naval Works Act. If that schedule is not contained in the original draft of the Bill, I hope the right hon. Gentleman will not offer any objection to a schedule being extended and introduced at some later period.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): I do not think much advantage is obtained by discussing a subject like this before the House in detail. If the defence of the Empire is to be dealt with it should be dealt with as a whole, and if it is to be dealt with as a whole, we have to face, and bring about the solution of, the most difficult problem—the combination of the resources of the whole Empire to discharge the obligations which attach equally and relatively to every part. I am not going to follow up this point now, and I do not know when, if ever, an opportunity will arise under our present procedure for dealing with it. It is the gravest problem of the present time. As regards the barrack accommodation to be provided under this Bill, it is quite plain that the War Office have recognised the modern requirements of the soldier, and we must feel very great satisfaction with the way in which the right hon. Gentleman spoke of the question of these dining-rooms and making the soldiers' abode as attractive as possible. I should not have risen if it had not been for the somewhat curious way in which the War Office launches out on the principle of naval defence. We have the War Office introducing a Military Works Bill which is largely concerned with fulfilling naval requirements. We had a Naval Works Bill brought in for Dover harbour, and largely justified upon military grounds. Year by year it is becoming more and more apparent that our defence is a complex defence, and that you cannot deal with this question in small parts, and where the functions of the War Office end and the function of the Admiralty begins is very hard to define, but the sooner it is

defined I think the better in the interests of economy. We have now had a very remarkable announcement, which will, no doubt, produce considerable discussion in our Empire over seas. We have had a qualification of the Duke of Devonshire's previous announcement as to the fundamental principle of the policy of the country, that as to places abroad approachable only by sea the responsibility for the protection of those places rested with the Navy. My hon. friend now says that declaration was mainly applied to Australia.

*MR. WYNDHAM: I explained the presence of the word "abroad" which appears to qualify the declaration by saying that the speech of the Duke of Devonshire had special reference to Australia. If the statement had been delivered on general matters the word would not have appeared at all.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB: That leaves us quite in the air as to the general principle of the policy of the Government as to these parts of the Empire abroad approachable only by sea; if the doctrine is good, it is good all round, and cannot be limited to Australia, but must be applied to every possession that we have which is approachable by sea.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): I do not think that the noble Duke's speech contained the words, "only approachable by sea."

*SIR JOHN COLOMB: Then I must have made a very serious mistake if I have misquoted it, but that is the impression which is borne in upon my mind. But the principle must be applied to all ports approachable only by sea, and the Admiralty take the responsibility to prevent organised invasion from the sea. The Secretary to the War Office tells us that some positions may be attacked by fleets, others by squadrons, and others by cruisers, and can be defended so as to meet those contingencies, but that opens up a tremendously large question. If you are going on the assumption that foreign fleets are free to move upon the water independently, you cannot regulate the action of those fleets; and a fleet on the sea will attack where and in any way she chooses. She will not be controlled by such

a policy as this. Once you get away from the position that your safety principally depends upon denying freedom to the enemy's fleet you are involving yourselves in complications which will lead, and have led, us into enormous expense. In another part of my hon. friend's speech we were told that this question of armaments has been thoroughly considered by a conference of experts. He has mentioned those experts, and we all know the extreme respect in which they are held in the Service. But this conference was called together to decide the question of armaments, and the number and nature of the guns to be placed at each position liable to purely naval attack. That is the basis on which the estimate of the requirements for armaments was prepared. It is a curious thing that the policy of the whole system, which comes down to us by tradition during the 40 years of peace between Waterloo and the Crimea, has been to leave it to the War Office to assume a naval hypothesis, very often without any evidence at all, and then to spend money because they think it is required. And what is this conference for? Is it to frame the naval hypothesis of defence. I should like my hon. friend, when he makes his reply, to tell me what were the instructions issued to the committee, what naval evidence was taken; because I should have thought that, as primarily the question was one of naval hypothesis, the majority of that conference should be naval and not military men. Taking the precautions we have taken, and, I trust, always will take, to provide a force necessary for maintaining our supremacy of the sea, I cannot for a moment accept this War Office definition of the sort of thing that is going to happen with regard to our commerce in war. It proceeds from a false notion. I do not desire to occupy the House at any length at the present stage, but I desire to call the hon. gentleman's attention to the fact that your commerce cannot be carried in the way which is apparently supposed. There is one point which I wish to touch upon before I sit down. You are going to spend £130,000, to begin with, at Wei-hai-wei. It would be flogging a dead horse to labour this particular point now, because the House has already committed itself to the expenditure of this money. As my hon. friend said in talking about the barracks at home, you

must give the men a roof and four walls. Well, Sir, we are committed, both by the Army Estimates and the Navy Estimates, to the men for Wei-hai-wei as a naval base. At the present time, however, we are really in a difficulty in discussing the question at all, but I shall raise the whole question of the relative value of Wei-hai-wei on another occasion. There is no doubt that a great deal of the money proposed to be spent is required, and I believe that as far as the barrack accommodation in the United Kingdom is concerned the expenditure is all that is to be desired. In conclusion, I feel bound to say that, in my opinion, there are a good many heresies underlying the speech of the Under Secretary. That is not from any fault of his own, but from the notions prevailing at the War Office and the confusion into which we are getting at the point where the War Office ends and the Admiralty begins, and *vice versa*, in their arrangements in general.

MR. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, S.): There are one or two observations I desire to make at this stage of our proceedings, after listening with interest to the speech of the Under Secretary. I do not propose to deal with the subject which has been raised by my hon. and gallant friend opposite, but it certainly does occur to me, as a mere outsider in these matters, that if what he alleges is the case it is a very imperfect way of maintaining our naval defence in outlying stations if the responsibility for it is in any degree divided between the War Office and the Admiralty. With regard to the question of Wei-hai-wei, we shall have more to say upon the subject at later stages of the Bill. I would only say now that Wei-hai-wei, from a financial point of view, has already grown to a very considerable extent. From the cost of a coaling shed of £6,000, the expenditure has grown to £130,000, and the liability upon the State is growing rapidly under our present system. Then there is one other point which I will just touch upon at this moment. At the time we last discussed the subject of barracks on the Army Estimates for Wei-hai-wei, there was another subject brought under discussion, and we were informed by the Financial Secretary for War that the matter would also be dealt with under this Loan Bill, and that is the question of barrack accommodation at Piershill in Edinburgh. Now, I did

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not observe that in the Under Secretary's speech he made mention of the crying want which was acknowledged by the Financial Secretary—and I have no doubt will be acknowledged by him—of better barrack accommodation in Scotland. He told us in his interesting speech of the great necessity there was (1) for a good house; (2) that it should be in the right place; (3) that it should be sanitary; and (4) that it should not be 100 years old. Having regard to the fact that Piershill is not a good house, is not in the right place, is insanitary, and is more than 100 years old, I venture to think that the barrack accommodation in Piershill, as well as in other places in Scotland—for the same remarks apply to them—is a matter which requires the urgent attention of the Government. That leads me to a more general point which has been already alluded to by my hon. friend the Member for Dundee. I should like to back up the appeal he has made to the Secretary for War, that this Bill should be made more like the Naval Works Act and less like the Military Works Act of 1897. In the first place, I trust that there will be a clause distinctly enjoining that there shall every year be presented to Parliament a statement of the estimated expenditure for the ensuing year for the various purposes of the Act. We get it regularly presented to us under the Naval Works Act from year to year, but we don't get it under the Military Works Act of 1897.

*MR. WYNDHAM: I have promised it.

MR. BUCHANAN: The hon. Member did promise it, but what I would like to see would be a clause in this Bill, which involves the expenditure of a very large sum of money, in similar terms to the clause in the Naval Works Act. I will give an illustration of the inconvenience which has been caused by the absence of a schedule in the Military Works Act, 1897, and of the way in which Parliament is prevented from obtaining full particulars of important military expenditure. It will be in the recollection of the hon. Member that the Military Works Bill was introduced and passed containing a schedule with only the same four heads as have been read out; but during the progress of the Bill the War

Office laid before the House of Commons a schedule giving in detail the barracks for which money had been spent, and every year since we have had in the Comptroller and Auditor-General's Report the details of the expenditure set out, and giving the amount which was spent upon these various barracks. But with regard to other heads of expenditure there are only gross totals given of the amounts spent under these different items. I am not pressing for elaborate details under the first item—defence works. I quite recognise that it is impossible in the public interest to set out in great detail the amount and nature of the armaments we are putting at particular places. But here is my illustration: The item of "Ranges, etc.," which I understand is always going to be put into this Bill. In last year's account there were only two items given, viz., artillery ranges £5,000, and the rifle ranges and manœuvring ground £354,000, of which no details, however, are given. The Public Accounts Committee had the matter before them, and, calling attention to the fact, it came out, in cross-examination of the War Office authorities, that this was not a large number of separate items, but, with the exception of about £10,000, was the purchase-money of the land at Salisbury Plain. Surely the House of Commons ought to have been informed where in the Public Accounts you are to find the money paid for that very important purchase of land, because I am perfectly certain that 99 out of 100 Members of this House would have been unable to identify the account under which it would come. That is entirely due to the way in which the Military Works Act was drawn up, and which I understand is to be perpetuated in this Barracks Loan Act. It is said that the whole of the expenditure on barracks is part of a fully considered scheme, so that there can be no difficulty in setting forth in main outlines the amount of money that is to be spent upon important stations. We are embarking upon a very serious financial liability. There is not merely the £4,000,000 which the hon. Member is asking for, which is a very considerable sum in a Loan Act, but we are told that, under one section alone of this Act which asks for £2,750,000, the total wanted to carry out the scheme elaborated by the War Office authorities, is no less than £5,750,000.

MR. WYNDHAM: I made it quite clear that it would be for our successors to complete or not the scheme.

MR. BUCHANAN: The hon. Gentleman may try to put the balance upon his successors, whose advent he appears to anticipate at a very early date, but the liability remains upon the country. Then again, with regard to defence works, he stated the total of armaments under the scheme was £1,300,000, but he was only asking for £1,000,000. That is a further liability which the Chancellor of the Exchequer will not recognise as a legal liability.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EX-CHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): The hon. Member is quite mistaken. When the schedule is presented he will see a note put to the schedule to the effect that no building will be undertaken which cannot be completed within the amount of four millions.

MR. BUCHANAN: I quite recognise that. I do not wish to labour this point, but the hon. Gentleman stated distinctly, both with regard to armaments and to barrack accommodation, that what was proposed in this Bill was only a part of this thought-out scheme, and I say that that is entailing a liability or financial responsibility on the future of this country. I should also like the hon. Gentleman to tell us what are the other financial liabilities or responsibilities still outstanding for barracks and cognate purposes. Am I right in saying that the whole of the money under the Barracks Act, 1890, is now exhausted or will be exhausted during the present year? Would he also tell the Committee what is the further liability under the Military Works Act of 1897? I gather there is something like £3,000,000 still left. These are one or two general matters which I desired to bring before the House at this stage, and I earnestly press the War Office authorities, even at this late date, to present a schedule in at least as general detail as was given in the case I have referred to.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I must confess I am somewhat staggered by the financial character of the proposal made to-day. Already the Chancellor of the Exchequer has taken away from its proper destination—the

liquidation of the public debt—first of all, a sum of £4,200,000, and secondly, a sum of £2,400,000; total £6,600,000, which he has devoted to military and naval works. I have nothing to do with the other £3,000,000 which he has diverted to other purposes. We are now asked for another £4,000,000 to be raised by way of loans, and it is suggested that the successors of the present Government may want something like the same sum to carry out the remainder of the scheme. The result will be that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, having captured on its way to its proper destination—the payment of debt—£6,600,000 of cash, having then intervened to prevent the application to the reduction of the permanent debt of £2,000,000, has now saddled the debt with a further sum of £4,000,000. That makes £12,000,000 in a very short period—all for naval and military works. As to the merit of these naval and military works, I was extremely interested and much edified by the statement of what I may call Imperial strategy, made with so much ability by the Under Secretary for War. I should rather have expected to hear the statement either from the Lord President of the Council, who is head of the Defence Committee of the Cabinet, or the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Admiralty, who would have been more properly charged with, at any rate, the naval part of the scheme. But I do not quarrel with the exponent of the policy, a policy the principles at the bottom of which are of the utmost gravity and importance to the Empire. I confess at once that in that exposition I do not think there was any proper grasp of the true principle. The whole of the notion that ran through my hon. friend's speech was that Her Majesty's Government have lost confidence in the Navy to protect these islands. I will explain why. We are told that there are to be certain stations, which are not named, some of them armed to the teeth, and others only against attack by occasional cruisers. What is the function of our Navy? We have understood our Navy to have one function and one alone—to follow up and to destroy the enemy's fleet, to watch for it leaving its ports, and never to let it escape without a battle, and never to leave it until it had got rid of the last ship. If you do that you prevent any large organised naval attack upon any of your ports or stations whatever. The

sea is open to you, and closed to your enemies. Your commercial vessels have not got to wait in a port for defence. They can traverse the sea with perfect freedom, and, indeed, they did so at the end of the last French war, for while the sea was absolutely closed to French ships English merchantmen sailed safely and freely to the most distant parts of the world, even without convoys. The French fleet was either destroyed or bottled up in harbours. The suggestion is that, although an enemy's fleet might be rendered incapable of doing any material injury, nevertheless, some torpedo boats or cruisers might escape and make raids upon certain ports. It is, therefore, argued that to meet these raiding expeditions we must have defences at certain places. I absolutely deny that you need pay any attention to raiding expeditions of this sort. Suppose that a cruiser, well found, well provisioned, and well provided with ammunition, is about to make a raid upon some town of ours, she will have to start from a point a considerable distance away, in order to avoid our cruisers; she may have to make a great detour, and she will have to get back again. The number of towns that could possibly be exposed to an attack by such a vessel is very limited indeed. A vessel, in fact, could only attack a town within a certain distance of her own ports. But all that time where should we be? The vessel would be opposed to what is admitted to be the dominant power of the sea. Suppose she escapes our ships and gets opposite the town she is to raid, what is she going to do? If she could land 5,000 or 10,000 men to capture the town, to destroy its defence works, its docks and its warehouses, and to hold it for ransom, that might be something; but that is not the assumption on which this policy of the Government is based. The assumption is that this vessel is to act from the sea. In the present day it is but a very small proportion of a man-of-war's crew that can be landed ashore for operations, and a battleship could scarcely land 200 men. What sort of town could such a force capture? You exclude the land theory entirely: you rest exclusively and entirely upon the action a cruiser can take from the sea against a town.

MR. GOSCHEN: She could get at the docks.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Yes; but it must be from the sea. Then it must be remembered that the amount of ammunition a cruiser carries is limited. She dare not expend it all upon the town which she is supposed to be raiding and on the docks she is to destroy; she must keep some for her own protection on her journey homewards. Therefore the damage she could do to the town is extremely small, even if she spent the whole of her ammunition. If she bombarded a crowded town, I doubt if she could kill a dozen people, and she certainly could not blow up any docks. I therefore think that the importance attached to these raiding expeditions is altogether exaggerated. I do not care a snap of the finger, if you will give me the predominance of the sea, for all the raiding expeditions that could be sent out by any enemy. They could do no good; their area of operations and their powers of offence against any town are exceedingly restricted, and I entirely dismiss it as a sound reason for proposing such an enormous expenditure of money as is now submitted to the Committee. It seems to me to show that the First Lord of the Admiralty and his new naval adviser, the Under-Secretary of State for War, have lost confidence in the Navy. If that is so, I can understand the proposal; they think our Navy could not destroy or adequately neutralise the work of a foreign navy. I have no such fear, however. I am certain that our Navy will be competent to deal adequately with the navy of any foreign Power. We have no doubt lost naval power, but not through any defects in our arms or ships, or naval system, but through signing scraps of paper like the Declaration of Paris, which prevent us from strangling our enemy's trade. I have not been surprised, after the experience of the past, that even more astounding proposals have been made at the Peace Conference, *i.e.*, that we should now, forsooth, part with the power of capturing any enemy's goods at all at sea. If that is not resisted, we may as well sink our ships and shut up our arsenals. No case has been made out for devoting this enormous expenditure to the defence of un-named stations against raiding by small vessels which have escaped from the paralysed main body of the enemy's fleet. There is only one other point I have to deal with. Again and again I

have endeavoured to secure the attention of this House to the intense importance of the Scilly Islands as a station for the Fleet. You have only to provide it with a breakwater, and place a few stores of biscuits and coals there. You do not want any buildings or fortifications or any garrison; a cruiser would cost less, and would suffice, while it would be movable when necessary. I have never been able to induce the First Lord of the Admiralty to assist me in this matter, although I have the authority of the greatest naval strategist known—Lord St. Vincent—who attached the utmost importance to these islands. I believe the Under Secretary for War would realise the importance did he know the position of the islands. I say that, because he drew a picture of what might occur on the trade route between Cape Clear and Ushant; does he know that the Scilly Islands are exactly midway between the two points? Of all places in the world, if we have to act in South Europe, we could have no better station. It would be most useful to the British Navy as a coaling station, and all that is wanted is a breakwater, which I have high engineering authority for saying is perfectly feasible. It would pay for itself over and over again, if a small toll were levied on shipping. During the Franco-German war German vessels coming from America took refuge, not at Plymouth or Portsmouth, but in the Scilly Islands, and at one time 500 German merchant ships were there, remaining till the end of the war. I trust that this point will not be lost sight of. As to the proposal to expend £130,000 upon Wei-hai-wei, I shall not venture to enter upon that, especially as my noble and gallant friend the Member for York may have a word or two to say upon the matter. We were told by the Prime Minister that Wei-hai-wei was taken in order to infuse courage into the Chinese Empire, and as an answer to the Russian advance upon that empire. Is that policy still being adhered to? That is an open question. If we are achieving those two objects the money may be well spent; if not, then it might just as well be distributed as prize money among the sailors in the Fleet. Finally, I do say it is a most serious thing for the Government at this time of the session to come down here and propose to us a scheme of strategy essentially wrong, founded upon false principles, and showing a distrust of

the British Navy. It is a strong step to do this, and to ask us to incur a further debt of four millions in consequence.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Belfast, W.): I am sure nothing could have been more lucid than the statement we have all listened to with so much pleasure from the Under Secretary of State for War. In spite of the fact that there is disagreement on some points, there is, undoubtedly, a substantial approval of his proposals by the majority of the Committee, and I think my hon. and gallant friend the Member for Yarmouth may well congratulate himself on the fact that at last in these matters we have got to this position, that while the Vote is essentially an Army Vote, and proposes an expenditure of four millions sterling on military works, the discussion, so far, has turned almost exclusively on naval matters. With regard to what has been said by the hon. Member for Dundee, I do not, of course, presume to make any statement on behalf of the Under Secretary; but I understand that while he is prepared to give us full details with regard to the works which are contemplated in the United Kingdom, he must exercise some slight reticence as to how the millions to be devoted to works of external defence will be laid out. It is obvious that it is better to withhold such information, and I therefore think the criticism of the hon. Member was a little premature. My hon. friend the Member for King's Lynn, who speaks with such immense authority on questions such as the Declaration of Paris, has taken, I think, a somewhat exaggerated line when he talks of the absolute unimportance of protecting our outlying ports against raiders. After all, there has been an attempt made to reduce this question of naval defence to an exact science, and although perhaps it has not yet absolutely succeeded, yet certain broad principles have been laid down in any steps that may be taken. I do not think the hon. Gentleman's remarks on this question carry conviction with them. He has mentioned the case in which raiding would be, if not impossible, at any rate very useless to the person undertaking it. But surely it is not very hard, by the exercise of a little ingenuity, to imagine a case where the result would not be so innocuous, and where there is a possibility of effecting

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much greater damage than he has led us to suppose. The position of Sierra Leone is one which, for a long time, has been considered as important, and even of more importance than the Scilly Islands, and I would point out, in answer to the suggestion that no ship could land a sufficient force to carry on offensive operations effectively, that in the case of Sierra Leone there is, within a short distance, a place where a considerable hostile force could be concentrated, and one much larger than any we could, at a brief notice, bring for the defence of the place. I do not, however, wish to enter into any arguments on this question. I will only say that, having attempted to acquaint myself, as he has succeeded in doing, with much of the literature on this subject, the impression on my mind is that he has not done the best service to the cause he has at heart, because exaggeration of that kind will certainly produce a reaction in the minds of many. I think it will be generally admitted that the proposal of the War Office to the effect that limited protection is necessary at carefully selected stations all over the world is a good one. There is a very large expenditure contemplated for the building of barracks, and the carrying out of necessary works in connection with such stations. We congratulate the War Office and the hon. Member most heartily on the decision which has been come to in this matter. It is almost impossible to exaggerate the need for improving our barrack accommodation, for undoubtedly, in the minds of many soldiers, there is created a feeling—I will not say of humiliation, but of disgust, by the circumstances in which they are compelled to spend their lives in barracks. I have been in scores of barracks, and I can confirm the picture which has been drawn by my hon. friend. There was a time when the matter was of little importance. But nowadays, when we have to come into the open market in order to compete for our soldiers, it is absolutely essential that we should not make the contrast between the lives to which they are accustomed and to which they are to be introduced too abrupt and too disadvantageous to the life we ask them to enter upon. I am sure that everyone will agree that the provision of dining-rooms would be an immense step in advance. Another improvement is as to the position of the cooking-room. As soldiers know, complaint is frequently

made in barracks of the great distance between the kitchen and the eating-rooms, and it is a fact that this affects, to a great extent, the satisfaction and contentment of the men with the rations they receive. I am glad that attention has been directed to this question of improved barrack accommodation, and I hope the result of this discussion will be that the hon. Member, and those for whom he speaks, will be encouraged to go a little further, and will see how much more he can give in the way of accommodation. I believe there are many who share my view that it is not altogether desirable to entrust this task to Royal Engineers, who within their particular province are unrivalled, but who are not always absolute masters of the art of providing suitable barrack accommodation. I should like the hon. Member, too, to get away from preconceived notions of barrack building. The present system began at a time when none of the scientific improvements of the present day were known, and when nothing had been done by great voluntary organisations for producing the maximum of comfort with the minimum of expenditure. I hope he will himself personally compare, as I am glad he has been comparing lately, what has been done in providing suitable buildings for civilians with what it is proposed to do in providing barracks for soldiers. If that is done, I believe a vast number of small matters, which will make an enormous difference in comfort, can be introduced without any extra cost. I was sorry to note one omission from the hon. Member's speech. I was sorry not to hear that something was to be done for the further improvement of St. George's Barracks. I have now, for 12 years, been urging that that should be undertaken, and I certainly was glad a few weeks ago to observe that at last the recruiting station at which two-thirds of the recruits for the British Army enter upon their career is being transformed from the miserable and disgraceful condition in which it was left so long to something not altogether unworthy of the British Army. I believe that decent baths are now being provided, and that more suitable accommodation is being set apart for the recruits while they are awaiting examination by the doctor. But much more than that is required. What we want is a central recruiting station for the Army which shall be worthy of that institution.

Now I come to the question of rifle ranges. The amount to be set apart for providing ranges is very small indeed—£40,000. To me it seems almost ludicrous, and I noted that the hon. Member treated it as a matter which was unimportant. Now, we have 200,000 Volunteers. I admit that hitherto they have been treated as of little value for the defence of the country. If that is the opinion, get rid of them altogether; but if you are going to retain the force and to depend upon it, surely it stands to reason that the first thing to do is to provide them with the means of firing off their rifles. They are Rifle Volunteers, and it seems to me it is like building the walls and floors of a house and then declining to put a roof on, to place the rifle in the hands of Volunteers and to give them no opportunity of learning how to use it effectively. I hope the hon. Member will be able to hold out a little more hope of supplying Volunteers with this accommodation, and I certainly do not think it is quite fair to call upon Volunteer corps in certain districts to come forward with large voluntary subscriptions in order to assist in providing the ranges. Seeing that it is a voluntary service, the least we can do is to supply their essentially military wants. In conclusion, I can only say I heartily associate myself with what has fallen from the hon. Member for Dundee, and from my hon. and gallant friend the Member for Yarmouth, with regard to one aspect of this question, which was not touched upon by the Under Secretary, but which must be considered if this great subject is ever to be satisfactorily dealt with, and that is the contribution of our self-governing colonies to the cost of Imperial defence. I have, on more than one occasion, troubled my hon. friend with inquiries as to what is going on in Canada with regard to a certain regiment. I am not now going to revive the controversy as to that regiment. But I have been informed that offers have been made by the Colonial authorities to provide barracks for this regiment under certain conditions. I know there is much to be said with respect to the value of these offers and the conditions attached to them. I have been anxious that we should have information on this point, because, as far as I know, that is the first substantial proposal which has been made in modern times by any great colony to grant a

money contribution towards the support of our military forces. There have been offers in relation to our naval forces, but I attach enormous importance to any offer that is made, either by Canada or any other colony, for I am sure that until, and unless, we get some contribution from our great self-governing colonies we shall every year find a growing reluctance on the part of this House to sanction the expenditure of these enormous sums of money. The hon. Member has been very reticent about this matter, and probably for good reasons; but I am confident that the time will come, and before very long, when that reticence will be misplaced, and when we shall have to ask the Government whether they have made any substantial progress in their endeavour to obtain from our self-governing colonies an expression of opinion as to whether they will or not take their share of the responsibilities as well as of the advantages of the union.

MR. WOODALL (Hanley): The Debate has already travelled over a very wide range, and I therefore do not propose to enter into any details, especially as the natural time for that will be after the Bill has been introduced. The discussion, so far, has been very interesting, and of exceptional importance, thanks probably to the very statesmanlike manner in which the Under Secretary for War explained his proposals. I wish simply to endorse the appeal which has already been made, that either in the Bill or in the schedule of the Bill about to be introduced, or in some other way which the Under Secretary may prefer, the House shall be put into possession of much more detailed information with regard to the different localities in which the money is intended to be spent than we have been accustomed to or is furnished in the statement before the House. There is an analogy for that to be found in the Naval Works Bill. I think we should have as full information as is consistent with the public interest.

*LORD CHARLES BERESFORD (York): There are one or two points which I think require greater explanation than we have yet received. There is the question of fortifying commercial harbours. I have always opposed, with whatever force I could, the plan for fortifying commercial harbours. I do not

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deny that there may be reason in some very limited defence in the case of a limited number of places; but if we invest money in fortifying commercial harbours we shall be employing money which ought to be devoted to mobile defence. I know the hon. Members who represent important ports occasionally suggest that a hostile cruiser or torpedo squadron might attack those places. But what in the meantime should we be about? If you have a sea fleet properly organised, its duty is to meet the enemy on the blue water and settle the question there, and it is far cheaper for the country to put money into mobile defence than to expend it on fixed defences ashore. Our traditional policy is a fighting policy, and if we go in merely for the defensive principle I do not think our Empire will last very long. We must attack on the blue water, and we take away from our power to have a big and efficient fleet if we invest a large amount of money on fixed defences ashore. The hon. Member has not stated what those defences are to be, and although I repeat that there may be places where limited defences may be necessary, they are very few indeed, and the expenditure of money on them should not be very great. Further, the hon. Member told us that his programme is not to be binding on his successors. I cannot imagine a more fatal proposition than that. The whole success of our naval defence is based on the fact that the plans are properly thought out from the beginning, and that continuity is assured. I am certain that a patchwork policy such as the hon. Gentleman advocates will defeat the whole object of spending this money. We shall not always be as well off as we are now, we may have periods of bad luck and bad trade, and then the Government of the day will naturally seek for some means of retrenchment, and it is not unlikely that the first proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer would be to cut off the expenditure on some of our defences. Another point I would like to call attention to is the desirability of taking the opinion of local authorities before works are undertaken. It has been brought to my notice that on many occasions, particularly at Malta and Gibraltar, the local authorities have objected, and with good reason, to the proposals of the War Office. I remember in one particular case, at Malta, that in spite of the objection of the local

authorities a fort was erected at a point overshadowed by two hills, and it was then found that if guns were placed upon it they could not be elevated sufficiently to fire over the nearest hill. The consequence is guns have never been placed there, and the fort is absolutely useless. I hope my hon. friend will assure the House that in this question of fixed defence there shall, before any work is undertaken, be a consultation with the local military committee. I also hope that my hon. friend will give us an assurance that we shall have full details in his Bill, for unless that is done it makes it very difficult for any Government who may be in power to ask Parliament for more money to spend on works of a similar character, because the taxpayer has a suspicion that the sum already granted may have been wasted. The Under Secretary slurred over Wei-hai-wei as if it were a nervous topic. I want to hear a great deal more about it. As far as I understand the matter, it is proposed to spend £130,000 on barracks at Wei-hai-wei, and to keep there a garrison of, roughly speaking, 1,500 or 2,000 men. I shall oppose the proposal in every way I can. It may be said I am altering my opinion as to Wei-hai-wei. Not at all. I said Wei-hai-wei might possibly, with a little expenditure of money, be made an excellent naval base, but I said that when the Government had a totally different policy to that I understand they have now. The Government are certainly and surely drifting into a sphere-of-influence policy as against the open-door policy, and what is the use of spending a large sum of money upon a place which, under the circumstances, would become a great danger to us and to our Fleet? Wei-hai-wei is in the German sphere of influence. If the sphere-of-influence policy is to be adopted, we ought to spend money in the Yang-tsze region. The question is, Do we intend to abandon our trade in the North or not? If we are to go in for spheres of influence, let us say so. It is impossible to have the two policies, and I shall vote against any money being spent on Wei-hai-wei until we know definitely what the Government intend to do for our merchants and trade in Northern China. Of the trade in the three northern ports, seven millions—

*THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! The noble Lord is going rather away from the subject now under discussion.

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***LORD CHARLES BERESFORD**: I apologise. But I would say that Wei-hai-wei is too far from Peking to be used for the purpose of exerting pressure on the Chinese Government. It is distinctly in the German sphere of influence, and for that reason I shall vote against any sum of money being spent there until we know distinctly what the Government policy is in China.

MR. WARNER: There are two or three questions on this Vote which I should like to address to the Under Secretary of State for War. The first question is as to the repayment of this loan. The honourable Gentleman stated that it would be paid in a fixed number of years. Would he mind telling us in how many years? The number of years makes a great deal of difference, and it is rather important that in expenditure of this kind the loans should be repaid before the guns purchased become obsolete. Another question I wish to ask is, what amount of time will be given under this Bill for the works to be completed in. I want to know whether the limit is to be ten or five years, or whether there is any limit at all to be put upon the period during which the works for which this money is to be voted are to be completed. With regard to the schedule I do not want to press that point. I understand that there is to be a schedule of the barracks in the United Kingdom, but no definite statement of the works and barracks abroad. Of course, we should like as much information as possible, but I understood from the remarks of the honourable Gentleman that there would be a schedule, and that it would define the different places in England where barracks and works would be proposed.

***MR. WYNDHAM**: I hope to give very full information in regard to all barracks. The only services on which I cannot give full information are defence works.

MR. WOODALL: Then I understand that the places in regard to the defences of which the money is going to be spent will be stated in the schedule, but not the character of the works proposed to be erected.

MR. WARNER: It has been pointed out already by an expert that this pro-

posal is bad finance. There are two objections to this Resolution. In the first place, we are borrowing money when the country is prosperous and rich; and in the second place, we are pledging the credit of the country for years ahead instead of only year by year. These are two great financial objections to this Resolution, and I think they are objections which cannot be got over. It has been pointed out already how the Chancellor of the Exchequer has dipped into the Imperial cash-box for £6,000,000, but, besides this, he has also drawn on future Chancellors of the Exchequer for £6,000,000 more. We on this side of the House object to pledging the credit of the country and borrowing money when we are in the height of our prosperity, and when the Government ought to have large funds at their disposal—which they might have had if they had not given it away to their friends in other ways. Even during the present session there is still a possibility of a further instalment being given to some of their friends. The great necessity for this large expenditure seems to be, according to the Under Secretary of State for War, that the Army has been increased by 25,000 men, by which number the establishment of the Army has been increased. But we do not want barracks to house an establishment. What we want barracks for is to house the men. It is quite true that on paper you have increased your Army by 25,000 men, but in reality you have not increased the Army at all. If we have only got an increase in the number of men on paper, it will be just as well to have the increase in the number of barracks also on paper. I do not quarrel with the proposal for the renovation of old barracks and rebuilding them on new patterns; but it does strike me as an extraordinary argument that the establishment requires housing when the men do not really exist. I can give instances of the establishment being far ahead of the number of men. The 2nd Coldstream Guards were up to their full strength a year or two ago, but only last month they were 234 men below their establishment strength. The 3rd Scots—which is, I believe, a new battalion—was 750 under their establishment. Surely this increase in the establishment, which only exists on paper, cannot be the reason for requiring this large Vote, because you cannot re-

quire for a mere paper Army extra housing accommodation. When you have got these extra men then it will be time enough to ask for this money. Then there are forty-five foreign stations, including Wei-hai-wei. The great advocate for the fortification of Wei-hai-wei, who is an expert upon this subject—I allude to the honourable and gallant Gentleman the Member for York—has condemned the policy of spending money at Wei-hai-wei, unless the Government alters its policy from that which it appears to be pursuing at the present moment. That appears to be another waste of money, and we desire to criticise strongly this throwing away of money on the part of the Government. Then there is a detail as to the proposal to build barracks on Salisbury Plain. I congratulate the War Office on the improvements which they are making by giving dining-rooms to the men in the barracks to be built on Salisbury Plain, and I hope the advice which has been given to the Department to-day to make other improvements will be taken into consideration, and that they will have somebody else besides the Royal Engineers to advise them as to the best shape of the rooms. I notice that the barracks at Salisbury Plain are almost all for infantry, and the cavalry have no barracks placed there at all. That is contrary to the statement of the Under Secretary for War, that there would be realised great economy in erecting cavalry barracks. The greatest economy which you could effect would be achieved by building more cavalry barracks, because you would be able to save a good deal of horseflesh which is wasted every year. I should also like to know if anything is going to be done in the way of amalgamating depôts. The Under Secretary of State for War mentioned that the depôts where the new battalions had been raised would be increased, but I hope that does not mean that there will be any more small battalion depôts created. I also wish to say one word about the rifle ranges. There is a very small sum allotted for the provision of ranges in this Bill; it only amounts to £40,000. I see, however, that there is £400,000 left out of the Military Works Bill. Now, there has been practically nothing spent on ranges, and I am not speaking simply from the Volunteers' point of view, for there are many Regular regiments which the War Office itself has to provide ranges

for. The result has been that some of these regiments have had to go without proper instruction in musketry, and some of them have had large amounts of money spent upon sending the men on railway journeys to the range. One of these cases near Whittington Barracks I have already brought to the notice of the Under Secretary for War, but the range still remains in the same condition which it was in three or four years ago. People have been down to inspect the ground, but no further progress has been made, although negotiations are supposed to be going on. Several Militia regiments have now to be sent considerable distances away so as to be in places where they can get to a range conveniently, and even some of the Regulars have to go long distances by train in order to go through their musketry course. The money which the Government is now wasting sending these men long distances to get to a range ought to be devoted to providing facilities for practice and the procuring of ranges both for the Regulars and Volunteers. That is one of the cases where there is an immense amount of waste, and I hope that the question of the provision of more ranges will be taken in hand and not played with, for something definite should be done in the direction of providing ranges, not only for the Volunteers, but also for the Regulars and the Militia, for whom the War Office have to provide. I hope these matters will play a more important part in the policy pursued by the War Office than they have hitherto done.

COLONEL WELBY (Taunton): I congratulate the Under Secretary of State for War upon the very satisfactory statement which he has just made, although, as an officer of the Army, I cannot help deprecating the tone he has adopted in estimating the comparative values of the Navy and the Army in their united duty of defending the country. It seems to me that, in saying that he does not intend to provide for the defence of this country by soldiers, he is supplying one of the strongest arguments possible to those who are opposed to any increase in the Army, and who contend that the Army is at present too great for our necessities. If you are not going to depend on the Army as a second line of defence, there is no necessity whatever for keeping up the War Office at its present

enormous establishment, there is no necessity for keeping these battalions of Regulars at home, and you might reduce the Militia and Volunteers. The honourable Gentleman says that the three army corps would be a means for delivering a counter-stroke in another country. I venture to say that it is absolute madness to think of sending two army corps to fight a Continental nation, unless perhaps it be Belgium or Denmark. The object of these organised army corps is that we should have an effective second line of defence capable of repelling an invasion, and if the Army is not to be treated as a second line of defence we should always be courting invasion and encouraging foreign nations to attack this country. In addition to that, when war is declared the Navy will have to defend the United Kingdom, and the Channel Fleet will be unable to leave the Channel because it would be afraid that the second line of defence would be incapable, even for a few days, of repelling invasion. The honourable Gentleman has spoken of a complete scheme of barrack accommodation, and I hope he has taken into consideration the requirements of the two or three army corps that would be required for the defence of the country. I am astonished to find that there is to be the large sum of £1,600,000 for the construction of a number of permanent barracks on Salisbury Plain to hold six battalions of infantry and seven batteries of artillery. I do not know whether the honourable Gentleman remembers an answer given by his predecessor on the 22nd March, 1897, when he declared there was not the least intention of creating a second Aldershot on Salisbury Plain, and no intention of erecting a number of permanent barracks there. I merely instance it as another case in which the utterances of responsible Ministers in the House of Commons are set aside by the military advisers of the War Office. They appear to entirely ignore what is said here. It is a very good thing for trespassers not to read the notices against trespassing, and it is probably on the same principle that the military advisers of the War Office do not read what is officially said here. For my part I do not say that Salisbury Plain is an unsuitable place; my objection is that we are going to make Salisbury Plain another Curragh or Aldershot; a mould into which every unit has to be pressed

into a new shape. My experience is that every unit that goes to Aldershot is told as a matter of course that he is inefficient, probably one of the worst they have had, and when he goes away that he is one of the best. The result is that a great deal of time which should be devoted to the training of men is given up to finding out the particular fads of the commanding general and the staff, and that unit does not learn a quarter of his military duties. If the honourable Gentleman would study more carefully the grouping of regiments into brigades, and let them move about the country, a great deal of the objection to Aldershot and the Curragh would be remedied. I am very much obliged to the honourable Gentleman for what he has said in regard to dining-halls in these new barracks. It is not an entirely new departure. Some of the new barracks at Aldershot have them, although they have not been adopted in the new barracks in Dublin. I would ask the honourable Gentleman whether he would see that the system is also applied to any new cavalry barracks that may be built. I cannot agree with the honourable Member for Lichfield, who thinks we ought to construct cavalry barracks on Salisbury Plain in order to avoid the wear and tear of horseflesh. The idea of manœuvres is that cavalry should go a long distance from home and carry with them all they require in the way of encampment and forage, just as if they were on active service, and if the manœuvres were to be within a few miles of the barracks all the advantages would be lost. I am very sorry the honourable Gentleman does not see his way at present to adopt the cubicle system, which should at least be experimented upon. I do not suggest that every room should be on the cubicle system, but certain rooms might be, and if men refused to sleep in them or misused them in any way, or absented themselves from barracks and were not found out because they occupied cubicles, then they might be drafted into the old-fashioned rooms. That would enable the system to be experimented on, and the authorities would be able to judge of its advantages and disadvantages. In some of the old-fashioned rooms there is one cubicle for a non-commissioned officer, and everyone can see what a privilege it is considered and how home-like it is made in photographs and little ornaments. I am perfectly certain that the want of homeliness is a great drawback to the Army at the

Colonel Welby.

present time. Not only has education spread throughout the country, but home life has spread enormously among the population from which our soldiers are drawn. Every honourable Member acquainted with a British barrack room knows what a bare, bleak, unhome-like place it is, and it is no wonder that a great many respectable men refuse to remain in the Army. There is nothing more bleak than the whitewashed walls, nothing uglier than the iron bed fittings. As a matter of fact, the whole equipment of a barrack room was designed in days when the Army was a school for ne'er-do-wells and bad characters, and it was more like the equipment of a prison than anything else.

*THE CHAIRMAN: The honourable and gallant Gentleman is now going into details perhaps suitable for the consideration of the Bill in Committee, but wholly out of place on this motion, which is really equivalent to a motion for leave to bring in a Bill.

COLONEL WELBY: On the question of cubicles which the honourable Gentleman mentioned, it would be very easy for a non-commissioned officer passing along a passage to see whether they were inhabited or not. I think that the improvements in barrack accommodation which the hon. Gentleman foreshadowed will be gratefully accepted by the Committee. They will remove some of the great difficulties now experienced in getting men for the Army, and if we cannot in some way or other encourage men to go into the Army, then we may have to abandon the voluntary system for a compulsory system.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): In the almost perfect speech of the Under Secretary for War there are one or two points which remain in doubt. I have heard three interpretations placed upon some remarks which fell from him. The Under Secretary said there was nothing in the Bill which would bind his successors. I do not know what the phrase "our successors" may have meant. The noble lord the Member for York looks upon it as meaning that there is to be no continuity of policy, but I am quite sure the Under Secretary did not mean that.

It is, of course, possible that he was looking forward—as a witty honourable Member remarked—to the time when the Financial Secretary and himself will have obtained the promotion to which they are entitled, and which they deserve. The interpretation I put upon the phrase was that the period over which the money was to be spent would be so short that practically it would not bind any Government likely to come into office in the future. The honourable Gentleman did not tell us over how many years the money was to be spread, and if he did he would tell us his opinion of the probable length of life of the present Government. That statement has been made with reference to previous military and naval loans Bills, and that brings me to the schedule. Various questions have been asked regarding it, and as the Under Secretary shook his head when an honourable Member on these benches mentioned it, it was rather gathered that there would be no schedule. In 1897 it is true, there was no schedule, but there was a separate paper. We ought certainly to have a schedule such as that in the Naval Works Bill, which would enable us to discuss the main items of expenditure. It is obviously impossible to bind ourselves two or three years beforehand as to what our expenditure may be—the Admiralty has already somewhat failed in that respect—but still we ought to know what are the intentions of the Government in the matter, although we cannot bind them to carry out these intentions. The Under Secretary suggested that there was some danger in giving this detailed information because of foreign nations, but that is a danger altogether exaggerated. In the case mentioned by the honourable Member for West Belfast it is absolutely impossible to conceal from a country having neighbouring colonies what our military preparations there were. They can tell the strength of our garrisons from time to time, and it seems to me idle to suppose that the concealment of information from this Committee would be a concealment from foreign nations. We have a right to have the whole statement laid before us. The noble Lord the Member for York took special objection to the item with regard to Wei-hai-wei. I confess it seems to me that we must vote to-day on the general principle of the expenditure, and if we are to have anything like a schedule in

the Bill of course there will be an opportunity of moving the omission of that or any other item, but I think the Bill ought to be presented in a form which will give us that opportunity. We ought not to be committed to-day in such a manner as would render us unable to vote against any particular item, simply because we assent to the general resolution. The Under Secretary in one part of his speech, looking somewhat sternly across the floor, attacked an imaginary school of politicians who were prepared to grant any amount of money to the Navy, but, except for naval purposes which to some extent are covered by military works, would refuse to grant expense to the Army. I am quite unaware of the existence of any such school. I have never seen any development of it in this House. Some honourable Members—and I have taken a part in opposing them—are opposed to all naval and military expenditure, and attack both alike in a somewhat vague and general way, but I have not found in this House any disposition to grant all the money the Navy desires and to refuse to grant money to the Army. What some of us have said is that the Admiralty give full value for the money they receive, but that we are highly sceptical about the military authorities giving full value for the money they get. I should not be in order in discussing that now, but we believe—as the Under Secretary so ably stated to-day—that it is essential for this country to possess a very much more efficient Army than it has at present, not only having regard to India and the Colonies and the purposes of home defence, but with a view of inflicting a counter-stroke on our opponents. Although it would be out of the question for us to take part in a Continental war without allies, yet it is impossible to see how peace could be obtained at the conclusion of a war without using our Army. In the case of any Power against which we should be called on to fight it is almost impossible to realise how the Navy could secure peace without a mobile Army to inflict a counter-stroke. It seems to me that otherwise war would drag on interminably. We believe firmly in a highly mobile Army. I share the views of the honourable and gallant Member (Sir J. Colomb) that we are too much inclined to spend money in fixed defences. We ought to be able to destroy any attacking force before the attack is delivered. I deprecate the sugges-

Sir Charles Dilke.

tion that there exists in this House any school of critics which thinks that expenditure on the Army is unnecessary; but it must see that the War Office gives us a full return for our money.

*MR. WYNNDHAM: We have listened to nine or ten very interesting speeches, but I would point out that I, as well as every other member of the Committee, labour under a certain difficulty in answering the questions which have been asked, because we have not the Bill and the schedule in our hands. Quite a number of questions would never have been asked if the discussion were deferred to a later and more convenient stage. When I spoke of "our successors" I simply meant those who as the Government of the day, as military advisers of the War Office, and as members of a Committee sitting in this House four or five years hence, would have to go on with the work in which I hope the Government and Parliament will make a considerable advance this afternoon. I meant that and no more. Then as to what I said about not binding our successors. I think the honourable Member for Aberdeen drove home that point more energetically than other honourable Members who have taken part in the discussion, and he argued, despite disclaimers, that these proposals committed our successors to future expenditure. That is not so. What we have been careful to avoid is to place upon them any Parliamentary liability or any financial responsibility, but neither we nor any one else can absolve them from the natural and patriotic responsibility which lies with every Government to go on with work which is absolutely necessary if our soldiers are to be properly housed and if our Empire is to be successfully defended. I am attacked from another point of view, namely, that we are asking for four millions, and that four millions will not do all that we think ought to be done in the way of defence, and the construction and reconstruction of barracks and that therefore we are proceeding in a patchwork manner. To this I reply that we have a complete scheme and, although we are only dealing with one essential part of it now, we have done our best to show our successors what our views are on this important problem. Passing to the question of the schedule, I can assure the Committee that full information will be given, but in giving it we

shall follow the form in the Act of 1897, and not the Naval Works Act. In the Act of 1897 there was a schedule in the Bill which contained only four heads, but there was an explanatory circular which gave the names of all the stations where barracks were to be erected, and very considerable details. In the present case it is intended to follow the precedent and to have a schedule in the Bill, and also a further explanatory schedule showing in detail the expenditure upon barracks proposed under this Bill, and in outline what we consider necessary for a complete scheme in respect to defences and barracks. But with regard to defence works the Government must abide by the view that it is not desirable to give full information. As to barracks, full information will be given; but as to the earthworks necessary for the guns information will not be given. I do not know whether I need take up the right honourable Baronet's reference to the school of critics I have already mentioned. I do not think it is quite so imaginary as he appears to suppose. If certain important Members of this House put the case of the Navy extravagantly high, they lead many people in the country to suppose that it is unnecessary to have an Army at all. If I may borrow a phrase from my noble friend the Member for York, this "blue water" school would teach the people of this country that they need not bear any military burdens at all, and that they might repose all their confidence in the Navy. That may not be their intention, but that is the deduction which is freely drawn from their arguments. The honourable and gallant Member for Taunton complained in his speech that I did not make enough of the Army. Nothing is further from my thoughts than to disparage the Army by not seeming to place a sufficient value on its services. What I mean is this. If there were no Navy and no sea, except as a means of cheap transport, there would have to be conscription, and instead of only three army corps there would have to be 20 or 25. I think I have endeavoured to tread a middle way between these two schools. The honourable Member for Dundee and some of the speakers who succeeded him made an attack upon the method of proceeding by loan instead of by Estimate. I think it was the honourable Member who threw out the suggestion, which I am bound to say astonished me, that if the Chancellor of the Ex-

chequer had a large surplus at command, he ought to have devoted it to this service. I should be very much surprised if the Chancellor of the Exchequer did anything of the kind.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: He did in 1866, for naval works, including barracks.

*MR. WYNDHAM: Well, he might have aided the loans, but the rule is that surpluses are devoted to the reduction of taxation. The reason for proceeding by loan is not because the Government desire to stave off their obligations or responsibilities, but because it has been proved to the point of demonstration that the method of proceeding by Estimate is most wasteful and extravagant. Lord Randolph Churchill's Committee made us familiar with that. It appeared from the evidence of Sir Lothian Nicholson before that Committee that, of a total of £800,000 which he considered essential for the good of the Service and the State, the Secretary of State sanctioned about £14,000 as a first instalment of a total of £115,000. Would anyone believe that it is economical to begin patching and fiddling in that manner? No, we think it is right to proceed by loan, even in days of abounding surpluses; but we give to the House an ample control over our policy. Not only do we give the schedule to the Bill to which I have referred, but every year we shall present a Return at the opening of the session, such as is circulated to-day, showing the estimated expenditure on barracks during the current year. And therefore the difference between our method of procedure and the procedure under the Naval Works Act is merely Parliamentary. We give the same information in our Return instead of in the Bill, a method which has involved a certain amount of inconvenience. I doubt whether I should be justified in following my critics in reference to particular barracks. The honourable Member for the Lichfield Division complained of the omission of additional accommodation in cavalry barracks from the scheme we have put before the House. I can only remind the House that under the recent additions to the Army no unit has been added to the cavalry, and that we have no immediate urgency for additional accommodation for cavalry, as we have for infantry

and artillery. I will tell exactly what additions have been made to the Army up to the 1st June. We have raised 7 batteries of field artillery, 6 companies of garrison artillery, 1 battalion of foot guards, and 4 battalions of infantry of the line, and added 30 men to the home battalions. We have raised the West Indian, the West African, and the Central African battalions, and have begun with the Chinese battalion. One dépôt and 3 companies have been added to the Army Service Corps. I have listened with great interest to the speech of my honourable and gallant friend the Member for Great Yarmouth, who is an expert in naval matters. I am not, although it has fallen to my lot to touch upon naval affairs in the course of my statement, because the needs of the Army and the needs of the Navy in this regard are very closely interlocked. I will not attempt to follow closely the honourable and gallant Member's remarks, but I may take this opportunity to dispel an illusion which seems to lurk in many minds, that the War Office—that is to say, the soldiers who advise the War Office—ride rough-shod over the sailors in these matters, that they get a lodgment, so to speak, in naval stations, and conduct matters not in a naval, but rather in a military manner. My noble friend the Member for York asked whether the conference between Admiral Beauchamp and Sir Henry Brackenbury had been in touch with the men on the spot at the naval stations. What are the steps taken in these matters? In the first place, the men on the spot report to and keep in close touch with the joint Naval and Military Committee of which eminent soldiers and sailors are members. That Committee works upon the whole of the case, and submits it in its entirety to the Defence Committee of the Cabinet. The Defence Committee of the Cabinet, having the case prepared for them by the joint Naval and Military Committee, based upon information supplied by soldiers and sailors on the spot, of course dictate the policy of the Government of the day. Therefore the honourable and gallant Member for Great Yarmouth must admit that there is no room for any soldier, however eminent, to take a land view instead of a sea view of these problems. I am not prepared to follow the honourable Member for King's Lynn in his contribution to the Debate. No doubt, through the imperfect way in

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which I conveyed my ideas in my first speech, the honourable Member is under a misapprehension as to the amount of money that is to be spent in defending our commercial ports against raids, and in support of what he called the new policy of depending on fortresses instead of depending on the Navy. What are these enormous sums? The whole sum taken for defensive works under the proposed Bill and under the Defence Act of 1897 only amounts to a little over two millions sterling.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: May I ask if the barracks are part of your defence works?

***MR. WYNDHAM:** I am not following that line. The real sting of the honourable Member's attack was that we were building fortresses in order to protect our commerce in our commercial ports, instead of depending on the Navy. Under the two Acts we have only asked for a little more than two millions, and even if the future scheme of the Government, which we regard as a complete scheme, were passed by our successors less than 2½ millions would be spent on all defence works, including those at the principal naval bases, the secondary naval bases, and the coaling stations. I ask the honourable Gentleman by what process of reasoning a small portion of an expenditure of little more than two millions can be legitimately described as an enormous sum?

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: The honourable Gentleman has left out of sight the £6,600,000 applied by the Chancellor of the Exchequer for naval and military works, and the sum in addition in the Army Votes.

***MR. WYNDHAM:** I have not these figures before me, but I think my honourable friend is exaggerating the amount taken in the Estimates. There is only a little over half a million for defence works in the past ten years. I pass from that, and come to the speech of the honourable Member for Belfast, who took a very kindly view of the intentions of the Government to raise the standard of comfort in barracks. The honourable Member suggested that we ought not to trust altogether for the designs of the new barracks to the Royal Engineers. I cannot be a

party to throwing any doubt upon the capacity of the design branch of the War Office. Our confidence in that branch has been fully justified, because we have submitted the designs that have been drawn up by the branch to Sir John Taylor, and he had scarcely anything to criticise and little to suggest. The honourable Member mentioned some constructions like Rowton House, and no doubt from such constructions we may be able to pick up a wrinkle or two; but I would remind the Committee that no amount of modern improvement will ever meet the special necessities of soldiers, who have to turn in and out many times in the course of the day. The new barracks to be erected will only consist of two storeys, instead of the three or more storeys which have hitherto prevailed. In regard to rifle ranges, we are about to spend a good deal of money under the Act of 1897. A range in the neighbourhood of large towns may cost from £10,000 to £40,000, and it is idle, therefore, to ask any Government to buy ranges for all the Volunteer corps. What we hope to do is, by improving the facilities of access, and introducing some amendments in the travelling allowances, to assist the Volunteer corps to a large extent. I think I have replied to most of the questions which the noble Lord the Member for York put in his speech, except one in which he invited me on to very delicate grounds. I must respectfully decline that invitation. It is bad enough to have to speak on some Admiralty matters, but if I were to take up Foreign Office affairs I should trespass beyond my sphere of interest and get out of my depth very shortly. I am aware that the discussion has been conducted under certain disabilities; but as we shall not be able to introduce the Bill until the Resolution is passed, I think the Committee would really consult their own convenience best by adopting the Resolution, and allowing the Government to submit the details of their proposals.

MR. DAVITT (Mayo, S.): I intend to divide the Committee against the Resolution as a protest against the continued waste of public money on needless military works — works which, I venture to say, will be considered in a few years' time to be as obsolete as those which are to be replaced by this money. I also think that a protest is required against the

inconsistency of what we are doing this afternoon. Here we are called upon to vote four million pounds of the people's taxes, in addition to all the millions already voted for the military necessities of the country, at the very moment when the representatives of Great Britain at the Peace Conference at The Hague are talking of peace and the necessity of reducing the armaments of the European Powers. I have an especial objection to some of the items. It is proposed to spend 630,000 dollars on military works at Halifax, Bermuda, the West Indies, and other points on the Atlantic. My view is that this is altogether unnecessary, because at the present time this Government and the Government of the United States are engaged in sending love messages across the Atlantic. Surely, when you are carrying on this diplomatic love-making you ought not to be making preparations for an attack. Against whom are these military preparations to be directed eventually? These guns are not turned against Germany or Russia; they are pointed to these Transatlantic cousins, and if you are sincere in your professions of love you are acting in an insidious and perfidious manner in wasting your money on these works.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR (Forfar): I cannot go as far as my honourable friend who has just spoken in condemning this expenditure; but I do think that it is worthy of the attention of the House that this expenditure is proposed to be incurred at an interval which is much less than on previous occasions after other vast expenditure. There was an interval of seven years between previous loans, whereas another loan is asked for after only two years. I was astonished to hear the honourable Gentleman allude to these days as days of abounding surpluses, for I have never heard the Chancellor of the Exchequer speaking of abounding surpluses. I agree with the honourable Member for King's Lynn in pressing home to the Government this enormous additional expenditure. I regret this Bill was not introduced at an earlier period of the session. The Works Bill in 1897 was introduced in February, certainly not later than March; and here we are, at the end of June, asked to consider a Bill of great magnitude and importance which would inevitably lay down the principles of

the policy of our defence at home and abroad for years. I would have been glad if the Government had presented to the House the opinions of the naval and military experts on which this expenditure is based. This House has intervened on such questions before, and I do think we should press the Government to give as full information as possible in regard to the defences abroad. It is of great importance that the information given should be on a schedule attached to the Act by which the administration of the powers under that Act should be bound and limited. The Government has not been conspicuous in taking the House into its confidence in regard to what sums are to be spent abroad. We have gone from stage to stage, each stage involving us in new consequences, until finally we are surprised and astonished at the result. For instance, there has been a perfectly honest endeavour to understand what the Government intend to do in regard to Wei-hai-wei. We were put off at first with the statement that a few hundreds of pounds were to be spent in dredging. Then another sum was asked for for a survey; and then another sum to pay for a Chinese regiment. We have, step by step, been forced into a kind of policy of drift in this matter, and have not been able to look at the question as a whole. As regards home defence, it is exceedingly important that the expenditure under the Act should be in the schedule, and that that expenditure should be abided by. There was a lavish expenditure on the distribution of troops through the United Kingdom thirty or forty years ago, which has been an obstacle to improvement ever since. I should, however, not be disposed to prejudice the future arrangements for the home garrisons and home defence. There is another reason for pressing on the Government an exhaustive schedule to the Bill. It has been the case in the past, and possibly it will be in the future, that items may be found in the schedule which are also found in the Estimates of the year. I do not think the Government could help undertaking this expenditure, but I do regret that they have not done something to press home more directly on the taxpayers of the country the responsibilities which they are now incurring. There is no increase of taxation, and yet we are involving the country in great liabilities for the military and

Captain Sinclair.

naval Services. I do not think this is a sound, honest, or courageous policy.

*COLONEL BROOKFIELD (Sussex, Rye): should like to congratulate my hon. friend the Under Secretary for War on the very interesting, clear, and bold speech which he made in introducing these proposals. He is also to be congratulated on the ability with which he has replied to the various criticisms which have been levelled at them. The hon. and gallant Gentleman who has just sat down expressed what we so often hear from those benches, the alarm the taxpayer must feel at the growing expenditure of the country; but all I believe the average taxpayer contends for is the view so often advocated by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean, that we should obtain proper value for our money; and in the statement of my hon. friend nothing could be more satisfactory than the indication he gave of combined naval and military policy, for which so many of us have so frequently contended. I cannot at all agree with the hon. Member for Lichfield, and one or two others, that a policy of this kind should be subjected to annual review at the hands of this House. I believe continuity of policy is above all things desirable, with as little politics blended with it as possible. I mainly rose to say a few words on the second portion of my hon. friend's remarks, viz., with reference to barracks. My hon. friend summarised the whole philosophy of that question in the phrase that what we should seek to provide for soldiers was good houses in the right place. To take the second point first, I am very glad that the principle of grouping together military units in the country is being faithfully carried out, not only for the highest strategic reasons—with which I will not presume to deal—but for the simple fact that the great difficulty of finding adequate ranges and manœuvring ground makes it more necessary than ever that large numbers of troops should be put in places where those advantages are provided for them. I also begin to think that the old brigade depot systems sooner or later will have to be re-examined, and the question of building barracks will again arise in that connection. I have often said I think the home battalions are subjected to a very unnecessary amount of moving about. I think this interferes with recruiting, as well as with the comfort of

barracks. I could never thoroughly understand why regiments should not be more territorialised, and each home battalion practically kept in one place. I believe if the home battalions were not moved about at all it would save an immense sum of money, and at the same time attract a better class of recruits. I am glad the hon. Gentleman is alive to the desirability of going further in the direction of securing more personal comfort and privacy for the soldier. I am glad that he has not given way to the demand for cubicles. They are very attractive at first sight, but I believe there are some considerations which should make him set his face against them. I very much doubt if any expert on the subject of sanitation would recommend cubicles in preference to large rooms. Then, from another point of view, they add to the cleaning up; they are dirty and untidy, for as it is there are many hidden recesses in every barrack room for hiding away bones and other refuse at the last moment, and such recesses would be increased if these insanitary and untidy dens were provided for every soldier in the Army. Lastly, I believe it might have a very serious effect upon discipline. If the young non-commissioned officer of the present stamp—which, I am sorry to say, is not quite as good as it used to be—were shut up in a cubicle he would present an irresistible target to soldiers of a certain stamp armed with boots outside the cubicle after he had gone to bed. Before I sit down I should like to associate myself entirely with my hon. friend the Member for Belfast in his remarks about Volunteers in connection with ranges. The House of Commons will have an opportunity of expressing its opinion as to the whole policy observed towards Volunteers, as to utilising them, or rather not utilising them, as part of the effective forces of the country. But I quite admit that so long as they occupy their present status and are allowed such immense immunities in the matter of discipline and freedom from real military duty, it is perfectly fair to call upon them to contribute to the cost of ranges.

MR. POWER (Waterford County, E.): During this session we have had various Debates on the subject of expenditure, and enormous sums have been voted by this House. It is said, and perhaps justly, that Great Britain has a great

interest in these matters. No doubt the trade of England, Scotland, and Wales is enormously interested, and the expenditure on naval and military works is to some extent an insurance for it. But what particular interest has Ireland in this expenditure? It is no benefit to us. We have, however, to pay the piper, and I think the Report of the Commission proves that we in Ireland pay very much more than our proper share. Any one who reads the history of this country will acknowledge that Irish arms and Irish brains and Irish blood have done their part in building up and extending British influence, but I should like to know what we have got for our excessive loyalty.

MR. HARWOOD (Bolton): I am very sorry to delay the Committee in going to a Division, but there is one criticism I desire to make. It must be remembered that these matters do not merely concern the professional element, whether naval or military, or amateur experts like the honourable Member for King's Lynn (Mr. Gibson Bowles) and the honourable Member for West Belfast (Mr. Arnold-Forster); they concern the nation as a whole. I want to call the attention of the Committee to one point which is in the minds of many people in the country, and which I think has been brought out very much in the course of the Debate this afternoon. What do we see? We have a motion brought in by the honourable Member who is, I suppose, the official mouthpiece of the Army in this House, and up to luncheon the discussion was almost entirely naval. One honourable Member went so far as to say that this motion ought to have been brought in by the head of the Admiralty, and another honourable Member said he was delighted to see that the whole discussion had been on naval matters. I would venture to point out to the House that this indicates a very great amount of inconsistency or weakness in regard to our arrangement of those matters, and I would tell the Committee that it is a weakness which many people in the country are alive to, and which this Committee will have to put right if our fighting forces are to be conducted properly. The time has come when we should work two separate branches like the Navy and the Army each with a head in this House, but a general head for the whole. The honour-

able Member, I believe, is technically the Under Secretary for War. This debate has brought out the fact that he really ought to be Secretary for War, not the Secretary for the Army or for the Navy. If ever this country is to manage its fighting forces properly it will have to make up a new and better organisation. We must regard our forces, whether on land or sea, as one thing. You might as well have a Minister for artillery, a Minister for cavalry, and a Minister for infantry.

*THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! I do not see how this is relevant to the discussion.

MR. HARWOOD: It is relevant, if I may say so, in this way, that the course of the discussion has shown the impossibility of dividing naval and military matters, and therefore the House has the right to ask that questions dealt with in this Bill shall be brought forward by a Minister who is responsible for both, and who can adequately consider both points of the problem.

CAPTAIN JESSEL (St. Pancras, S.): We have heard a good deal about the Bill, in the course of this Debate, from the naval point of view. It seems to me, however, that the principal amount is involved for military works, and I do not think that that fact has been sufficiently recognised by the Committee. I should like to congratulate the Government on two points in bringing in this Bill. In the first place they recognise what has been urged for years by experts—the desirability of grouping together larger units than hitherto. The fact that they propose to spend £1,600,000 on Salisbury Plain will rejoice the hearts of those who, like the right honourable Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean, maintain that we fritter away our forces in towns and thereby impair their military efficiency. I think the Government have taken a great step in advance. If they could only take another step, and try and get rid of some of the wretched old barracks in the towns, they would still further earn the gratitude of those who have studied the question. Then there is another point on which I think they are to be equally congratulated, and that is that they propose to do something for the better comfort of soldiers in

Mr. Harwood.

barracks. We hear a good deal of the housing of the working classes, and I think even the honourable Gentlemen opposite will sympathise with a proposal that affects the working soldier. At present he starts the day by having to go about half a mile to wash; when he has done that he goes out in the field, and subsequently returns to his meals. The midday meal is brought from another quarter of the barracks—sometimes three-quarters of a mile distant—and it arrives rather cold. When he sits down to eat his food he is often interrupted, and the enjoyment of the meal spoilt, by a friend of his brushing out his clothes prior to going on guard. The proposed dining-halls will be a great improvement on the present dining arrangements. I may remind the Committee that they exist in nearly every army in the world. Somehow or other it is only lately that we have woken up to the necessity of these rooms. There is one other matter that I should like to recommend to the consideration of the Under Secretary of State, and that is the need for the better lighting of the rooms. Barracks are dismal places, and there is often one solitary gas-jet in a room for thirty men. It is impossible for men to read in these rooms, and the consequence is that they are driven into the streets or the public-houses. It seems to me extraordinary that in these days of scientific improvements no better arrangements are made for lighting the barracks, either by some system of incandescent lighting or even by electric light. I had been hoping to hear from the Under Secretary that some effort would be made to try the cubicle system in the new barracks. I do not believe that under that system discipline would suffer in any way, and it is more than probable that its adoption would attract a better class of recruits to the Army. I cannot agree with the honourable Member for South Mayo that the United States will regard the expenditure on the barracks at Halifax as a menace. I can assure him that there are no barracks in the world which require renovation so much as those at Halifax. I congratulate the War Office on their enlightened policy in trying to make the soldier more comfortable than he has been hitherto.

MR. WARNER: There are two or three questions which I should like the Under Secretary to answer. I put them

before, but did not get a reply. The first is, How many years is the redemption of this loan to be spread over ?

*MR. WYNDHAM : Thirty.

MR. WARNER : The second is, Whether the amount of time for the completion of the works will be entered in the schedule ?

*MR. WYNDHAM : No, Sir ; we shall build as fast as we can.

MR. WARNER : I maintain, notwithstanding the statement of the honourable Gentleman, that the actual numbers of the Army have not been materially increased. The increase of 25,000 men is an increase on paper only. In addition to that, in spite of there being no practical increase in the Household Brigade, there have been the greatest efforts to increase it. During the last few years the authorities have reduced the standard by four inches.

THE CHAIRMAN : Order, order ! That has nothing to do with the subject under discussion.

MR. WARNER : The other point I wish to put is that there are 14 ranges to be bought, or whatever it is called. Could we be given any assurance that some fixed number of those ranges will be made within the present year ? I am afraid that those 14 ranges, like the 25,000 men, are also on paper.

MR. GALLOWAY (Manchester, S.W.) : I want to ask whether the Government intend in connection with this matter to consider the advisability of keeping regiments in large centres of population from which recruits are obtained, with a view to obtaining the number of men they require, and in order to keep up the recruiting in this country.

MR. MADDISON (Sheffield, Brightside) : We have had some interesting points put by military Members about cubicles, and the smell of Irish stew, and other more or less important reforms, but some of us are not content with these details. We strongly object to these constant sums of money which the House is called upon to vote for military and naval expenditure. Sometimes it is the Navy, and then very forcible appeals

are made about maintaining our first line of defence, and we are always assured that in maintaining the first line of defence less money is required for the Army. When that Vote is obtained, honourable Members use very similar language for increased expenditure on the Army. A good deal of solicitude has been shown for the private soldier. I have very serious doubts as to the direct benefits that go to that individual. I am afraid that a good deal of the money is lost on the way.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS : Oh !

MR. MADDISON : That is my opinion. I said "lost," and it is a misfortune to lose anything. Let me give one illustration that came under my own notice with respect to the private soldier and the way he is treated, in spite of all the large sums of money that are voted. The honourable Gentleman the Under Secretary for War knows the case, and so far as he was concerned everything was done promptly that could be done. Here is the father of a lad serving in one of Her Majesty's regiments in India. He gets to know indirectly that his son is seriously ill. He is too poor to send a telegram ; he appeals to me, and I write to the permanent head of the War Office.

*THE CHAIRMAN : Order ! This has nothing whatever to do with military works ; it might be a subject for criticism on the Army Estimates.

MR. MADDISON : I was only using it as an illustration. However, I drop that at once, and say that there are thousands and tens of thousands of people in this country who are living in a miserable and wretched condition, and, being constantly called upon to vote these huge sums of money for the Army, I feel it to be my solemn duty to protest. The only sums of money that go easily through this House are those which are devoted to military or naval expenditure, with an occasional variant to landlords and parsons. The time has come when we should enter our protest against this sort of thing. The expenditure is going up by leaps and bounds, and at the same time nothing is being done for the soldiers of industry, upon and through whose labour

it is alone possible to maintain your policy. After careful thought I deliberately register my protest, and if a Division is taken I shall vote against this expenditure, which unless checked will ultimately bring ruin on the country.

The Committee divided: Ayes, 241; Noes, 66. (Division List No. 202.)

AYES.

Aceland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
Aird, John
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allhusen, Augustus Hy. Eden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arnold, Alfred
Arrol, Sir William
Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. J. FitzRoy
Baird, John George Alex.
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W. (Leeds)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Bartley, George C. T.
Barton, Dunbar Plunket
Beach, W. W. Bramston (Hants.)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Beckett, Ernest William
Beattinck, Lord Henry C.
Bethell, Commander
Bhowaggee, Sir M. M.
Bill, Charles
Blakiston-Houston, John
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bolitho, Thomas Bedford
Bond, Edward
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex.)
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, A. Montagu
Brymer, William Ernest
Bullard, Sir Harry
Butcher, John George
Caldwell, James
Campbell, Rt. Hon. J. A. (Glasg.)
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, E.)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.)
Chamberlain, J. A. (Worc'r)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chelsea, Viscount
Clough, Walter Owen
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles R.
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cotton-Jodrell, Col. Ed. T. D.
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Curzon, Viscount
Dalbiac, Colonel Philip Hugh
Dalkeith, Earl of
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan)
Denny, Colonel

Mr. Mullison.

Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Douglas-Pennant, Hon. E. S.
Doxford, William Theodore
Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Evershed, Sydney
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edw.
Fergusson, Rt. Hon. Sir J. (Manch'r)
Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Firbank, Joseph Thomas
Fisher, William Hayes
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Fitz Wygram, General Sir F.
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Fry, Lewis
Galloway, William Johnson
Gedge, Sydney
Gibbons, J. Lloyd
Gordon, Hon. John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir J. E.
Goschen, Rt. Hon. G. J. (St. George's)
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greene, W. R. (Cambs.)
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Gunter, Colonel
Halsey, Thomas Frederick
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord G.
Hamond, Sir C. (Newcastle)
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert W.
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Hayne, Rt. Hon. C. Seale-
Heath, James
Hill, Sir E. Stock (Bristol)
Hoare, E. B. (Hampstead)
Holland, W. H. (York, W. R.)
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Hozier, Hon. James Henry C.
Hutton, John (Yorks, N. R.)
Jackson, Rt. Hon. W. Lawies
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnson-Ferguson, Jabez E.
Johnson, William (Belfast)
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kemp, George
Kenyon, James
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Kinloch, Sir John George S.
Kitson, Sir James
Knowles, Lees

Lambert, George
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Leese, Sir J. F. (Accrington)
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn (Swan.)
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hon. Walter (Liverpool)
Lopes, Henry Yard Buller
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, Rt. Hon. James (Kent)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lubbock, Rt. Hon. Sir John
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
Macdonald, John Cumming
Maclean, James Mackenzie
McArthur, Charles (Liverpool)
McCalmont, Col. (Antrim, E.)
McIver, Sir Lewis (Edinburgh)
McKillop, James
Manners, Lord Edward Wm. J.
Maple, Sir John Blundell
Mappin, Sir Frederick Thorpe
Marks, Henry Hananel
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Mellor, Rt. Hon. J. W. (Yorks.)
Melville, Beresford V.
Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
Milbank, Sir P. C. John
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milner, Sir Fred. George
Milton, Viscount
Monk, Charles James
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morgan, Hon. Fred (Monm'ths)
Morton, A. H. A. (Deptford)
Muntz, Philip A.
Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G. (Bute)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, Wm. Henry
Newdigate, Francis Alexander
Nicholson, William Graham
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Northcote, Hon. Sir H. S.
Norton, Captain C. W.
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Palmer, Sir C. M. (Durham)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Alfred E. (Cleveland)
Pease, H. Pike (Darlington)
Pease, Sir Joseph W. (Durham)
Penn, John
Percy, Earl
Perks, Robert William

Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
 Pilkington, R. (Lancs. Newton)
 Pilkington, Sir G. A. (Lancs. SW)
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Pollock, Harry Frederick
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Pretymann, Ernest George
 Price, Robert John
 Purvis, Robert
 Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
 Renshaw, Charles Bine
 Richardson, Sir Thos. (Hartlepool)
 Rickett, J. Compton
 Robinson, Brooke
 Rothschild, Hon. Lionel W.
 Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
 Rutherford, John
 Scoble, Sir Andrew Richard
 Sharpe, William Edward T.
 Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
 Sidebottom, W. (Derbyshire)

Simeon, Sir Barrington
 Soames, Arthur Wellesley
 Spencer, Ernest
 Spicer, Albert
 Stanley, Hon. A. (Ormskirk)
 Stanley, E. J. (Somerset)
 Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
 Stevenson, Francis S.
 Stewart, Sir Mark J. McT.
 Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
 Stone, Sir Benjamin
 Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
 Sutherland, Sir Thomas
 Thomas, A. (Glamorgan, E.)
 Thornburn, Walter
 Thornton, Percy M.
 Tollemache, Henry James
 Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
 Tritton, Charles Ernest
 Valentia, Viscount
 Wallace, Robert

Walton, John L. (Leeds, S.)
 Webster, R. G. (St. Pancras)
 Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
 Whiteley, George (Stockport).
 Whiteley, H. (Ashton-under-L.)
 Whitmore, Charles Algernon
 Williams, J. Powell. (Birm.)
 Wilson, John (Falkirk)
 Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks.)
 Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
 Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Hudders.)
 Wylie, Alexander
 Wyndham, George
 Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
 Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
 Young, Commander (Berks, E.)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
 Sir William Walrand and
 Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Allen, Wm. (New. u. Lyme)
 Atherley-Jones, L.
 Austin, M.
 Barlow, John Emmott
 Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
 Billson, Alfred
 Birrell, Augustine
 Blake, Edward
 Burns, John
 Cameron, Sir Chas. (Glasgow)
 Carvill, Patrick G. Hamilton
 Channing, Francis Allston
 Clark, Dr. G. B. (Caithness-sh.)
 Colville, John
 Commins, Andrew
 Dalziel, James Henry
 Donelan, Captain A.
 Doogan, P. C.
 Duckworth, James
 Dunn, Sir William
 Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
 Evans, Sir F. H. (South-ton)
 Farrell, James P. (Cavan, W.)

Fenwick, Charles
 Flavin, Michael Joseph
 Flynn, James Christopher
 Gibney, James
 Goddard, Daniel Ford
 Gourley, Sir Edw. Temperley
 Hammond, John (Carlow)
 Hayden, John Patrick
 Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
 Horniman, Frederick John
 Jordan, Jeremiah
 Labouchere, Henry
 Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cmb'land)
 Leng, Sir John
 Lewis, John Herbert
 Lloyd-George, David
 Lyell, Sir Leonard
 MacAleese, Daniel
 MacDonnell, Dr. M. A. (Qu'nsC)
 McEwan, William
 McGhee, Richard
 Maddison, Fred.
 O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)

O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
 O'Connor, Jas. (Wicklow, W.)
 O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
 Oldroyd, Mark
 Richardson, J. (Durham, S. E.)
 Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
 Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
 Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
 Smith, Samuel (Flint)
 Souttar, Robinson
 Steadman, William Charles
 Strachey, Edward
 Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
 Sullivan, T. D. (Donegal, W.)
 Thomas, David A. (Merthyr)
 Warner, Thomas C. T.
 Wedderburn, Sir William
 Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
 Wilson, John (Govan)
 Woods, Samuel
 TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
 Mr. Davitt and Mr.
 Power.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Shall I be in order in asking when we may expect a copy of the Bill and the papers?

*MR. WYNDHAM: At an early date.

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the issue, out of the Consolidated Fund, in addition to the sums authorised by the Military Works Act, 1897, of such further sums, not exceeding in the whole £4,000,000, as may be required for defraying the cost of certain military works and services, such sums to be raised in manner provided by the said Act.

Resolution to be reported To-morrow.

TELEGRAPHS (TELEPHONIC COMMUNICATION, ETC.) BILL.

Order read, for resuming adjourned Debate on Question [20th June], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed. Debate resumed.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, East): I was an interested auditor of the Debate last night, and it may be convenient if I explain to the House the impression left upon my mind by that discussion. I gathered that in many parts of the House there was a strong, and indeed a very clearly expressed, objection to much of the Government's proposal, and I quite recognise that in a Bill of this character

we should be sacrificing more time than we have really at our disposal—

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS : No !

MR. A. J. BALFOUR : If we were to attempt to force against such opposition the measure which my right honourable friend has introduced and so ably defended. I do not, however, think that this need be necessarily fatal to the further progress of the measure. I do not believe, as far as I am able to understand it, that there is any impossibility of smoothing away the difficulties which at first sight might seem almost fatal to the further progress of the measure. I would suggest that the best course the House can pursue is to accept the Second Reading of the Bill. If we are prepared to take that course, my right honourable friend would at once move that it be referred to the Grand Committee, for, I take it, unless it can go through that Committee there is very little chance of our being able to find time to pass it through the remaining stages in the whole House. I shall not press that motion for the Grand Committee this afternoon; I shall adjourn it, and I hope and believe it may be found possible to smooth away some of the difficulties which I have referred to. In that case, we shall proceed in Grand Committee and go through the rest of the stages in the House without, I hope, taxing the patience of the House or unduly drawing upon the time still at our disposal for bringing the work of the session to a conclusion. If that course meets with the approbation of the House, as I hope it will, I trust that without further discussion they will consent to the Second Reading. I will then make the motion, and we shall see whether we can carry out the remainder of the programme I have ventured to sketch to the House. It is better to make the motion that this Bill be referred to the Grand Committee now, because, while it is possible to withdraw upon that, it is not possible to alter our course subsequently, if, after the Second Reading, we say the Committee shall stand on such and such a day. That finally commits the House to discussing the Bill in Committee of the Whole House, and it is not possible, if we take that course, to subsequently modify it. In my judgment, to discuss this Bill in Committee of the Whole House is to give up all hope of passing it in the course of

the present session. I hope, therefore, the House will adopt the course I now press upon them. If they do, we may have good hope that before the end of the session this Bill may become law.

MR. STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton) : I have listened with consternation to the statement of the right honourable Gentleman the Leader of the House. It means nothing more nor less than the killing of this Bill. I speak with some interest in the matter, because I have sat through one of the important Committees that have dealt most exhaustively with the whole of this question. There have been two Committees which have done so, and now it is to be referred to a Grand Committee after all.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR : May I interrupt the honourable Gentleman? Referring the Bill to the Grand Committee is the only way by which we can hope to pass the measure—it will shorten the proceedings rather than lengthen them.

MR. STUART : It is exactly that that I do not think will be the case, and I am sorry that I differ in this matter from so experienced a Parliamentarian as the right honourable Gentleman. I should have liked to see this motion made by the right honourable Gentleman the Secretary for the Treasury, who has so ably conducted this Bill hitherto. I hope we shall hear some protest from our front bench upon this matter. The “lobbying” which has been going on day after day and week after week is such as I think the House ought to repudiate. The best way to repudiate it is to go on with the Committee stage of this Bill in the whole House at once, and with the greatest expedition we can. We had better bring out in this House the opposition to this Bill than have all the “lobbying” which has taken place in this House repeated in the Grand Committee. I am speaking for Members on each side of the House, and I speak with strong feeling, having with other Members of the House given great attention to the matter. I end as I began, by saying that I heard the statement of the right honourable Gentleman with consternation, and I hope the course suggested will not be adopted.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. HANBURY, Pres-

ton): May I, with the leave of the House, say that it is impossible to give all the reasons for the course we have adopted to-day, but I think the House generally knows the great interest I take in this Bill, and I do firmly believe that the motion which has been made by the Leader of the House is the very best way of endeavouring to pass this Bill this session.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanark, Mid.): On a point of order, with reference to what the First Lord of the Treasury has stated. He stated that if this Bill were committed to the House in the usual way it would not be competent thereafter to commit it to the Standing Committee on Law.

***MR. SPEAKER:** If the Bill were to stand on the Order Book for Committee simply, it would be competent to move to discharge the Order and to send the Bill to a Standing Committee.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): The House has been taken by surprise by the announcement made by the right honourable Gentleman. But I quite appreciate the difficulties that have arisen in the way of this Bill, owing to the various interests involved and the strong opinions which prevailed in regard to it. But, wishing well to the Bill, I accept the declaration of the Leader of the House that it is the full intention of the Government to proceed with the Bill, and that they have adopted this novel course to make the success of the Bill more certain. I hope that the opinion expressed by my honourable friend behind me will not be realised, and that this is not to clear the boards for another Bill which has been announced, and which may occupy a good deal of time. We should strongly oppose the reference of this Bill to a Grand Committee if it were likely to be prejudicial to the interests of the Bill. But I accept the assurance of the Leader of the House that that is not the case.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As a personal explanation, I might say the great desire of the Government is to pass the Bill. It is quite obvious that we shall not do so unless we get the Second Reading to-day. We are not springing any new procedure on the House. It is the ordinary practice that a Bill of this kind should be referred to a Grand Committee.

MR. LABOUCHERE: The Leader of the House is under a misapprehension as to the opposition to this Bill. The proceedings which took place a few nights ago amounted to a public scandal. We had speeches of an hour in length from the Ministerial side of the House, and, among others, from the right honourable Gentleman the Member for the London University, who is trustee for the debenture holders of the National Telephone Company, and in this sense he is connected with the company.

***SIR JOHN LUBBOCK (London University):** I am not trustee for the company, but for the debenture holders, and I have not myself any interest either as a shareholder or debenture holder in the company.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Two Members from Liverpool got up and spoke at great length, but Liverpool has a good service, and has been, in the general acceptance of the world, squared by the company. All these have been obstructive speeches, and the only wonder to me is that the Leader of the House did not move the closure. Why does he allow himself to be dominated by the company? We on this side are all in favour of the Bill. All these speeches were obstructive, and we know perfectly well that if this Bill goes to a Grand Committee it will not come out without Amendments, and the same tactics will be adopted on the Report stage. In order to make the Government really responsible for this Bill, let us not give them the Second Reading to-day unless the Bill be put down to be referred to an ordinary Committee of this House.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): As a London Member I may say we shall be very disappointed if some Bill is not passed. I do not wish to do anything wrong or unfair to the company, although I think there has been a great deal too much "lobbying" on their part, which I greatly regret; but at the same time there are the people who live in London to be considered, and the facilities which should be given to them. I do not think we shall gain anything by its being sent to a Grand Committee. If the right honourable Gentleman gets the Second Reading and then puts it down as a first Order it will go through very fast, and we shall get the

Bill this session. If that is not done we shall not.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, &c."—(*Mr. Balfour.*)

Debate arising,

Debate adjourned until Monday next.

INEBRIATES ACT (1898) AMENDMENT BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. CALDWELL: The object of this Bill is to remedy an error in the Bill of last year. A similar Bill was introduced to amend the Metropolitan Police Bill, and no doubt next session another Bill will be introduced to amend the Inebriates Act Amendment Bill, and that is the way legislation in this House is conducted.

It being half-past Five of the clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

QUARRIES.

Bill to apply the provisions of the law relating to the weighing of minerals contracted to be gotten in coal and ironstone mines to certain quarries, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Alfred Pease, Mr. John Wilson, Mr. Atherley-Jones, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. Richardson, and Mr. Joseph Pease.

QUARRIES BILL.

"To apply the provisions of the law relating to the weighing of minerals contracted to be gotten in coal and ironstone mines to certain quarries," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday, 3rd July, and to be printed. [Bill 245.]

PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE.

Seventh Report brought up, and read; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 4) BILL.

Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill, as amended, to be considered To-morrow.

CLERICAL TITHES BILL.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): Upon the motion for the Adjournment, I should like to ask whether there is any truth in the rumour that the First Lord of the Treasury has handed in a notice to introduce to-morrow the Clerical Tithes Bill under the Ten-minutes Rule, because if the right honourable Gentleman intends to pursue such a course I desire to give notice that I shall avail myself of every opportunity of protesting against such an abuse of that Rule.

THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (SIR W. WALROND, Devon, Tiverton): Notice has been given that the Bill will be introduced to-morrow. There is no such thing as the Ten-minutes Rule. The Bill will be introduced under Standing Order 16 and before Supply.

Adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Six of the clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 22nd June 1899.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the further Standing Order, applicable to the following Bill have been complied with :

BIRMINGHAM CORPORATION.

The same was ordered to lie on the Table.

GREAT WESTERN AND GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY COMPANIES BILL.

Witnesses ordered to attend the Select Committee.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

Report from, that the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the London and North-Western Railway (Additional Powers) Bill ought to be dispensed with and the Bill allowed to proceed :

Read and agreed to.

LONDON, CHATHAM, AND DOVER RAILWAY BILL.

GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY BILL.

HASTINGS HARBOUR BILL. [Lords.]
Reported with Amendments.

AIRE AND CALDER NAVIGATION BILL.

Report from the Select Committee, that the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, no parties having appeared in opposition thereto ; read, and ordered to lie on the Table ; the orders made on the 8th of June and Friday last discharged ; and Bill committed for To-morrow.

SHEFFIELD CORPORATION MARKETS BILL.

CITY AND BRIXTON RAILWAY BILL.

Read 2^a, and committed.

VOI LXXIII. [FOURTH SERIES.]

LONDON IMPROVEMENTS BILL.

Read 2^a, and committed : The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

LINCOLN AND EAST COAST RAILWAY AND DOCK BILL.

Read 2^a, and committed.

BRYNMAWR AND WESTERN VALLEYS RAILWAY BILL.

Read 3^a, with the Amendments ; further Amendments made ; Bill passed, and returned to the Commons.

WEST GLOUCESTERSHIRE WATER BILL.

Committee to meet To-morrow.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 3) BILL.

House to be in Committee on Monday next.

MID-KENT GAS BILL. [Lords.]

Commons' Amendments considered, and agreed to.

WALKER AND WALLSEND UNION GAS (ELECTRIC LIGHTING) BILL.

Brought from the Commons ; read 1^a ; and referred to the Examiners.

JONES DIVORCE BILL. [Lords.]

WISHAW WATER BILL. [Lords.]

Returned from the Commons agreed to.

SHOTLEY BRIDGE AND CONSETT DISTRICT GAS BILL.

Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 5) BILL.

House in Committee (according to order) : Amendments made : Standing Committee negatived : The Report of Amendments to be received on Monday next.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 6) BILL.

House in Committee (according to order) ; Bill reported without Amendment ; Standing Committee negatived ; and Bill to be read 3^a on Monday next.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 13) BILL. [Lords.]

Read 3^a (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 3) BILL.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES PROVISIONAL ORDER (BORROWSTOUNNESS) BILL.

Read 2^a (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the whole House To-morrow.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 8) BILL.

Read 2^a (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the whole House on Monday next.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 16) BILL. (No. 135.)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (HOUSING OF WORKING CLASSES) (No. 2) BILL. (No. 136.)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL. (No. 137.)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 7) BILL. (No. 138.)

MILITARY LANDS PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL. (No. 139.)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (GAS) BILL. (No. 140.)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 9) BILL. (No. 141.)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 11) BILL. (No. 142.)

PIER AND HARBOUR PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL. (No. 143.)

Brought from the Commons; Read 1^a; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

Twenty-sixth annual report by the Accountant for Scotland to the Scotch Education Department.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

No. 2293. France (the Society Islands).

No. 2294. Germany (Bavaria).

EGYPT, No. 5. (1899.)

Despatch from Her Majesty's Agent and Consul-General at Cairo, enclosing a

report on the Soudan by Sir William Garstin, K.C.M.G.

GREENWICH OBSERVATORY.

Report of the Astronomer Royal to the Board of Visitors of the Royal Observatory, Greenwich, read at the annual visitation of the Royal Observatory, 3rd June, 1899.

SCIENCE AND ART DEPARTMENT.

Directory for the year 1899; with regulations for establishing and conducting science and art schools and classes.

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING ACTS, 1882 TO 1890 (PROCEEDINGS).

Report by the Board of Trade respecting the applications to and proceedings of the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 to 1890, during the past year: Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

POOR LAW ACTS AMENDMENT BILL [Lords].

A Bill to amend section 1 of the Poor Law Act, 1889, Section 4 of the Poor Law (Apprentices, etc.) Act, 1851, and Section 4 of the Pauper Inmates Discharge and Regulation Act, 1871—Was presented by the Lord Harris; read 1^a; to be printed; and to be read 2^a on Thursday next. (No. 132.)

FINE OR IMPRISONMENT (SCOTLAND AND IRELAND) BILL.

SECOND READING.

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

*THE EARL OF JERSEY: My Lords, the object of this Bill is to assimilate the law in Scotland and Ireland to that prevailing in England and Wales. Up to January 1st, 1899, a prisoner committed to prison in default of payment of a fine, whether in England and Wales, Scotland, or Ireland, could only obtain release before the expiration of the period for which he was committed by payment of the full amount of the fine. The Departmental Committee of 1894 on Habitual Offenders, etc. (Scotland), strongly recommended that prisoners so committed should be allowed to work out their sen-

tences partly by imprisonment and partly by money payment—a remission of their term of imprisonment in default being made, proportionate to the part of the fine imposed which they were able and willing to pay—in other words, that a prisoner who had been sentenced, say, to a fine of twenty shillings or twenty days, and who could raise, say, ten shillings, should be liberated after ten days' imprisonment on payment of that ten shillings, instead of being kept in gaol till the very end unless he could pay the entire sum. This recommendation was adopted in the Prison Act, 1898, which came into effect on the first day of the present year. That Act, however, does not apply to Scotland or Ireland, and the object of this Bill is to extend to these countries the same reform in that respect which that measure enacted for England. The enacting clause of the Bill follows verbatim the wording of the Prison Act, and I beg to move that it be now read a second time.

Moved that the Bill be now read 2^a.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR OF IRELAND (Lord ASHBOURNE): My Lords, so far as Ireland is concerned the Irish Office approve of this Bill, and give it their hearty support. It is a Bill which they will gladly see placed on the Statute Book, and one which they would have been willing to have brought in themselves if it had not been introduced by the noble Earl.

On Question, agreed to.

Bill read 2^a (according to Order); and committed to a Committee of the Whole House to-morrow.

ISOLATION HOSPITALS (AMENDMENT) BILL. [Lords.]

COMMITTEE.

House in Committee (according to Order).

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2:—

*THE EARL OF LICHFIELD: In moving the Amendment standing in my name, I should like to say that all the Amendments which I shall propose to this Bill have been prepared with the assent of the

Local Government Board. When the Bill was read a second time before the Whitsuntide recess, the Local Government Board had not decided whether they could support all the provisions in the Bill or not; but I am happy to say that since then they have agreed to the provisions, and the Amendments before your Lordships this afternoon have been prepared with their approval. The result of the Amendments will be to strengthen the Bill if passed, and to facilitate future dealings between the Local Government Board and the local authorities on these subjects. The object of the first Amendment, which I am now moving, is that where a hospital is sold by an authority the Local Government Board shall satisfy themselves, before they allow the sale, that adequate hospital accommodation is going to be provided under the new arrangement, and that where a district receives money in repayment for the hospital that repayment should go against capital sums, and not be devoted to the reduction of the rates.

Amendment moved—

“In page 2, line 2, after ‘Board’ to insert ‘Provided that no sanction in pursuance of this section shall be given by the Local Government Board unless the Board are satisfied that adequate accommodation for hospital purposes has been or will be provided for the use of the inhabitants of the district for which the hospital to be transferred was provided; provided also that all moneys which become payable to a district council or a joint board in respect of a transfer in pursuance of this section shall be applied in such manner as the Local Government Board direct either in repayment of any loan of the district council or joint board, or for any other purpose for which capital moneys may be applied.’”—(*The Earl of Lichfield.*)

*LORD HARRIS: My Lords, the object of the Local Government Board in suggesting this particular Amendment was to take care that the district which had transferred its hospital to the county council should have sufficient accommodation in the event of an outbreak of infectious disease subsequent to the transfer of the hospital. This clause has been agreed to by the noble Earl and the Local Government Board, as have all the others, and the Local Government Board have no objection to them.

Amendment agreed to.

Other Amendments made: Bill re-committed to the Standing Committee;

and to be printed as amended. (No. 133.)

MANCHESTER CANONRIES BILL.
[Lords.]

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

THE LORD BISHOP OF MANCHESTER: My Lords, the object of this Bill is to deal with funds derived from the sale of the houses of residence of the Dean and Canons of Manchester, which now amount to £1,941 a year. By Section 20 of the Parish of Manchester Division Act, 1850 (13 & 14 Vict. c. 41), the net proceeds of sale of the houses of residence of the Dean and Canons are required to be applied by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in or towards procuring a fit house of residence for the dean, canon, minister, or incumbent who, in case such sale had not taken place, would have been entitled to the premises so sold, or otherwise for the increase of the income of such dean, canon, minister, or incumbent, or for both such purposes, as to the said Commissioners shall seem best. Your Lordships will therefore see that this money with which we are proposing to deal belongs by law to the Canons of Manchester, and cannot be taken from them in order that it may be applied to any other object, or given to any other person, without fresh legislation. With the unanimous consent, however, of the Dean and Canons of Manchester it is now proposed that a fresh disposition shall be made of this sum of money. At present the incomes of the Canons are of equal value—nominally they are £600 a year and a house, but all the houses have been sold, and they were sold for very different sums. Consequently, at the present time, the senior Canon's income is £1,900; the second Canon £900; the third Canon, £900; and the fourth Canon, £641 a year. As the duties of the Canons are exactly the same, the state of things to which I have called attention is not desirable. Nor was it contemplated, for the Act under which the Manchester diocese was formed originally intended to make the incomes of all the Canons the same, and to give to each Canon £1,000 a year. It is now proposed, instead of having this unequal disposition of the fund, that in future all the

incomes of the Canons shall be £850 a year each. That, I must say, is not the whole of the income which the Canons will possess, because, by the Manchester Division Act, when a man is made a canon of Manchester he becomes incumbent or rector of a certain designated parish in Manchester, for which he receives £150 a year from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. The total income of a Canon, therefore, will amount to £1,000. Possibly to some persons that may seem rather a large sum, in the present state of circumstances, to assign to a canon for his income; but I must ask your Lordships to remember that the parishes of which these Canons are made Rectors by law are amongst the largest and poorest in the City of Manchester, and involve a considerable amount of labour, being thereby a burden and not an advantage. Again, a canon of Manchester cannot possibly hope, as is the case with the canons of other cathedrals, to hold a rich or desirable living. He is obliged to hold that which is assigned to him. If your Lordships are of opinion that these considerations are sufficient to justify the appropriation of £1,000 a year of the sum to which I have referred towards the income of a canon, there will remain a sum of £941 a year to be further appropriated, and of this sum the Canons now desire to divest themselves; the money belongs to them by law, but they propose to divest themselves of it in order that it may be applied to the more efficient performance of Divine worship in the Manchester Cathedral. By the decision of Chancellor Long, the Canons have been prohibited from employing any part of the sum of money which belongs to their general fund to assist the choir, except so far as would maintain four singing men and four singing boys. That is an exceedingly inefficient choir, as the church and the congregation are both large. The choir frequently fails to make itself heard, and experiences considerable difficulty in leading the worship of so large a congregation. I hardly suppose that any of your Lordships will think that Archbishop Tait was a Ritualist, and yet this is what he said about the function of a cathedral:

"It is, perhaps, the greatest function of a cathedral church that it should exhibit to the diocese an example of the highest form of worship, with all the appliances which sacred art, moderated by sound judgment, can contribute."

What example, I ask your Lordships, of the highest form of worship is to be obtained from a choir consisting of four singing men and four singing boys? If it is necessary, and I think everybody will admit that it is, that the choir should be improved, I do not think any objection can be taken to the source from which it is proposed that the support should be obtained, as it is to come from the present incomes of the Canons of Manchester. We have certain Cathedral reformers in the City of Manchester—Canon Nunn and Mr. Freston—who put forward a statement in 1888 respecting one that had been made by the late Bishop of Carlisle. The Bishop had referred to

“that absurd choir of four singing men and four singing boys.”

Upon that the following criticism was made by our Cathedral reformers :

“This is the original parochial choir ; there is no reason why it should not be augmented by subscription or otherwise. A rearrangement of the sums spent on the Cathedral would, it is thought, provide all that is necessary, without trenching on the fund required for the poor parishes.”

It is precisely what these hostile critics suggested that is now provided in the Bill before your Lordships. We desire to provide a choir from the existing incomes of the Canons of Manchester, who are willing that it should be so provided. Not a penny is taken from the fund which is applicable to the poor parishes, and seeing that the Bill is a very moderate and reasonable one, I have great pleasure in moving its Second Reading.

Moved, “That the Bill be now read 2^a.”
—(*The Lord Bishop of Manchester.*)

***LORD EGERTON OF TATTON :** My Lords, I desire to support the Second Reading of this Bill, both as an Ecclesiastical Commissioner and as one well acquainted with the wants of the churches and Cathedral of Manchester. There is no interference in the Bill with the revenues assigned to the 117 parishes of Manchester, and therefore there is no opposition to it from the rectors. There is unanimity, which has been sought for for a long time, among the Dean and Canons with regard to the redistribution of their incomes. This is a really moderate reform, and one which, I think, Parliament might fairly be asked to sanction, more especially as it is supported

by the general public opinion of the Church people in Manchester. Considering the large sums which are assigned to the rectors of other large towns, such as Bury and Blackburn—often £1,000 a year—I do not think it is unreasonable that a similar sum should be allotted to the Canons of Manchester. It should not be forgotten that these Canons have to do double duty, that of rector and canon, and have to supply the wants of their parishioners, who often number between 7,000 and 10,000, by providing one or more curates. With regard to the proposed increase in the Cathedral choir, I would point out that the Cathedral in the nave alone is capable of holding 2,000 people. It will therefore be seen that the proposal is not an unreasonable one. The object of the Bill is to equalise the incomes of the Canons, and, after so doing, to allow the balance of the proceeds of sale of the houses of residence to be applied to purposes connected with the service and administration of the Cathedral, and I trust it will pass without opposition ; it meets the requirements of the case, and will tend to the making of better spiritual provision for the inhabitants of Manchester.

On Question, agreed to.

Bill read 2^a (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the whole House on Monday next.

TRAWLERS' CERTIFICATES SUSPENSION BILL [Lords.]

THIRD READING.

Order of the day for the Third Reading read.

Moved, “That the Bill be now read 3^a.”
—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

LORD HENEAGE : My Lords, I have taken the somewhat unusual course of proposing, on the motion for the Third Reading, that the Bill be read a third time this day three months, and I hope I shall be able to satisfy your Lordships that I have good and substantial grounds for the action which I am now taking. This Bill I may almost say slipped through its Second Reading without any real Debate, without any explanation as to the novel and unprecedented principle which the Bill involves, and also without the knowledge of those most interested in it. The only protests against the

Second Reading were made by the noble and learned Lord, Lord Russell of Killowen, and the noble Earl the Secretary of the Board of Trade. This is no new Bill. It is the Bill which was introduced in the House of Commons two years ago by some Scotch line fishermen, supported by the Scotch Fisheries Board, and it was then opposed by the representatives of the fishermen and also by the Board of Trade; and, so far as I know, neither the fishermen nor the owners of fishing vessels nor the Board of Trade have changed their minds in the slightest degree with regard to their objection to the Bill. In Scotland the trawlers, and in England the whole of the fishing industry, are opposed to it, and the sea fisheries boards repudiate the Bill altogether. What is the necessity for this Bill? No attempt has been made to prove the necessity for it. On the Second Reading the noble Lord the Secretary for Scotland stated that the present laws had not been the failure they were represented to be, although he approved of the Bill in a somewhat modified form. The noble Earl the Secretary to the Board of Trade pointed out—and I specially press this upon the notice of your Lordships—that the Board of Trade considered the penalties too severe for the offence, and that the Bill would impose penalties upon British trawlers which would not be applicable to foreign vessels guilty of the same offence in territorial waters. This is the decisive opinion of the Board of Trade, after having considered the question for three years. But this Bill includes all British and Irish territorial waters as well as the waters which are under the bye-laws of the Scotch Fisheries Board. What case is there, my Lords, for these fresh penalties? One would have thought, when a harsh and severe penalty was being proposed, that some case would be made out showing that the law had been broken throughout the length and breadth of the land. The Board of Trade returns, however, show conclusively that the law has been obeyed, and that no fresh legislation is required. In the last seven years in English and Scotch waters there have only been six cases of a second offence and one of a third offence; that is to say, one case per annum during the last seven years, and yet the principle contained in this Bill is proposed for adoption. In Scotland it is very difficult to tell what have been the offences

Lord Heneage.

in territorial waters, because the offences during the last three years are added together, and no attempt is made at differentiation between the offences in territorial waters and the offences under the bye-laws of the Moray Firth. I very much doubt, my Lords, whether there have been many offences in the territorial waters of Scotland. I believe the offences have been committed by Scotch vessels in the Moray Firth, which is in an exceptional position. They have there one-sided and harsh bye-laws, which are in direct violation of the law of nations, and have not that respect which they ought to have from law-abiding people. They protect foreign vessels, but not British vessels. In Moray Firth foreign vessels can fish without any restraint or penalty, but British vessels are not allowed to enter the Firth without being subject to the bye-laws of the Scotch Fisheries Board. We who look after the interests of sea fisheries desire to see the law observed; but still it is a very difficult thing indeed to impress upon men the necessity of obeying the law when it is repudiated by them and is against the national conscience. We are "conscientious objectors" in this matter. We believe if Moray Firth is open to foreigners it ought to be open to British vessels also. The principle of this Bill is resented by all British smackowners and fishermen as insulting and unnecessary, especially at the present time when diplomatic negotiations are going on with Denmark with regard to their new and harsh rules. This is not the moment to bring in a Bill of this kind. It is proposed in this Bill to suspend the certificate of registration of a trawl vessel for six months where the master shall have been convicted of a second or any subsequent offence.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: The Bill provides that the order shall be made for any period not exceeding six months, which is the maximum.

LORD HENEAGE: If the certificate is suspended for any time it means that the vessel is to be prevented from earning dividends for its shareholders for the time under six months during which the certificate is removed if its skipper has violated the law in disobedience to his masters' orders. I think your Lordships will recognise that that is a very strong

order indeed. I would remind your Lordships that in England we have been able to enforce the law by means of a mild penalty of £5, and I venture to say that the proposition contained in this Bill is a novel and monstrous one. It is unknown in any other country, and unknown in any other trade in this country. I would ask your Lordships what you would say if a proposition were made to suspend the certificate of an ocean liner because it had come into collision with another vessel on the high sea, or if you were asked to prevent an omnibus being run in London because it had offended against some police regulations, or to prevent a railway engine from performing its duties because the driver had been guilty of some offence. Yet this is the very principle which is proposed in this Bill for the fishing industry. Under these circumstances, I do not think your Lordships can be surprised that the fishing industry feel that this is an unjust and extraordinary thing to do. I would ask your Lordships to consider what your position is in regard to the Third Reading of this Bill. It is utterly impossible that the Bill can pass into law this session.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN :
Why ?

LORD HENEAGE: Because, as a private Member's Bill, it will never get through the House of Commons. If your Lordships vote in favour of this Bill now you will be voting in favour of this principle being applied to Great Britain, where, as the statistics I have given you show, the law is obeyed and the additional penalty is not needed. But if you pause, and adopt my motion, it will be perfectly competent to consider the matter more fully and better on another occasion. I would suggest to my noble friend behind me who is in charge of this Bill that he should withdraw it, as he has no chance of passing it this session, and that Her Majesty's Government should undertake to look into the whole question, not only from its local aspect as it affects Great Britain, but from its imperial and international aspect, and deal with it if necessary next year. My Lords, I move that this Bill be read a third time this day three months.

Amendment moved—

“To leave out ‘now’ and add at the end of the Motion ‘this day three months.’”—(*The Lord Heneage.*)

*THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Lord BALFOUR of BURLEIGH): I expected the noble Earl who brought in this Bill, and who has carried it through its previous stages, would have answered some of the observations which the noble Lord has just made; but as he evidently expects me to say something I will accept the challenge thrown out by the noble Lord, Lord Heneage. I am bound to say, however, that I am afraid the discussion we are engaged in to-night is a somewhat academic one. We are engaged in discussing the question whether a certain Bill introduced into this House by a private Member shall or shall not be read a third time. I am afraid that under the conditions which exist in another place the friends of the noble Lord who has last spoken will have thoroughly effectual means of preventing the passing of the measure. I could not help thinking, when the noble Lord was addressing the House, that he was disguising, or at any rate passing over, the real case which exists for this Bill. I am not going to say that it is absolutely perfect, but a case does exist for legislation upon the lines contained in this Bill. There is no intention whatever, by any of the provisions of this Bill, to interfere with the legitimate operations of those who are engaged in the industry of trawling. For those who offend against the law not as a regular practice I perfectly admit that the existing penalties are sufficient, and I would not be in favour of increasing them; but there is a small minority of those—I will concede that it is a small minority—who make it an habitual practice to offend against the bye-laws and against the limits which have been imposed, for reasons which it is not necessary now to discuss, upon their industry. The noble Lord referred to figures, and quoted some remarks which I made upon the occasion of the Second Reading of the Bill. He omitted to remind your Lordships that the case for this Bill rests upon the fact that there are a small minority of vessels which make an absolute practice of hovering round the three-mile limit, and, under cover of darkness, and when they think the preventive service is not at hand to detect them, of making incursions into the places where

they know they should not go. One of these vessels has been convicted no less than eight times within a short period of years. Others have been convicted six, five, and four times within the same short period. I am perfectly certain, though I cannot prove it, that they deserve to have been convicted a greater number of times, and I constantly receive reports through the Fishery Board of vessels which are well known being sent out under cover of darkness to pursue their nefarious operations. The noble Lord says that the law has been obeyed. I admit it has by a large majority of those engaged in the industry; but I venture to suggest to the noble Lord that it would be better for the industry in which he takes so large an interest if he could make up his mind to abandon the cause of those who break the law and confine his advocacy to those whom he thinks are being unduly interfered with although they do not habitually break the law. The noble Lord says the law is obeyed because there have been very few convictions in recent time, but I would remind him that convictions are to a great extent matters of chance. This is one of the evils of the present system, under which very few of the boats engaged in the detective service are devoted to the work of detecting vessels guilty of illegal trawling. During the last two or three weeks we have been more successful in finding out those who have been disobeying the law, and if he takes the figures of the more recent operations during this year the noble Lord will find that the law has not been so well obeyed as he represents to the House. As I have said, I do not think this Bill is absolutely perfect, and efforts were made in the Committee to see whether, if concessions were made to the noble Lord, he and those for whom he speaks would withdraw opposition in another place; but the policy of the noble Lord was soon declared, and his policy was to get everything he could from us in the Committee, and not to come under any obligation of any kind with regard to dealing with the small percentage of trawlers whom, to us in the Committee, he frankly admitted should be subjected to further penalties. The noble Lord has commented upon the severity of the penalties imposed in this Bill. But it must be remembered that the severe penalty is only to be imposed after the second or subsequent offence over a short period. It is perfectly clear

Lord Balfour of Burleigh.

that it is a maximum penalty. I do not think the noble Lord himself is seriously alarmed that any real injustice will be done under this Bill, for the safeguards are amply sufficient. This penalty will only be inflicted in cases where there is repeated and deliberate intention to disobey the law, and therefore I think that part of the measure in every way justified. Although the Bill has no chance of passing into law this session, I hope your Lordships will not go back upon the decision at which you arrived when the Bill was read a second time and referred to Committee. During its progress through Committee it has been made much more simple, and the power of inflicting the very large penalty—that of preventing a vessel from going to sea—has been taken away from the local courts and transferred to the Board of Trade. The object is not to put an unduly severe penalty on the owner of the vessel. The clause as it is now framed allows the vessel to be used for other purposes than fishing, but I think your Lordships will see that if in the process of fishing an owner allows his vessel to be habitually used for breaking the law, it is not unfair to say that his vessel should not be allowed to go to sea as a fishing boat for a period within six months, although it is not to be altogether suspended from operations other than fishing. It is not my business to make out a case for this Bill. It is not necessary for me to say, and I do not say, that either my Office or the Board of Trade think it incapable of improvement. I simply desire to say that at this stage I think it would be a mistake, and it would certainly be misunderstood, if the House were to go back upon the decision previously arrived at, and I therefore hope your Lordships will allow the Bill to be read a third time.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN:

My Lords, I do not at all complain of the somewhat unusual course which has been taken by the noble Lord in moving the rejection of the Bill on the Third Reading, because I know that when it was read a second time he was not able to be present. At the same time I would respectfully demur to the remark he made that the Second Reading was slipped through. As a matter of fact, due notice was given of the Second Reading, and noble Lords who entertained any objection to the Bill had ample opportunity of

being present. The point your Lordships have to consider to-night is not whether the Bill is likely to pass into law. If we were to limit the Bills we read a third time to those which we were fully convinced would be passed into law, I feel sure the number of Bills that we should pass would be considerably curtailed. With regard to the merits of this Bill as it stands it is hardly necessary, after what the noble Lord the Secretary for Scotland has said, to remind your lordships what the Bill does and does not do. The noble Lord (Lord Heneage) has indulged in very strong epithets in regard to it, and has said how monstrous it would be if your Lordships were to pass it. I think his epithets are hardly warranted by its provisions. I desire to impress upon your Lordships that this Bill does not make any alterations in the existing law; all that it does is to provide an alternative and severer penalty on a second offence. That is the Bill. It has been considered, as your Lordships have heard, by the Select Committee, who made this material alteration in the Bill: that instead of allowing the severer penalty to be imposed on the first occasion on which the offence was committed, as the Bill stood, this more severe penalty should not be imposed until the second offence. There is, I contend, a good case for a more drastic penalty than that which at present exists, as repeated fines fail to prevent the offences being committed. The number of trawlers convicted of disobeying the law are a very small proportion indeed of the number of those who break the law. I have heard, although convictions have not taken place yet, that there are grounds of complaint in Ireland as well as in Scotland, and that the Irish Office have looked at this Bill and are of opinion that it might with advantage be extended to that country. I do not think it is necessary for me to trouble your Lordships at any greater length, and I will conclude by asking your Lordships to give this Bill a Third Reading.

On Question, whether "now" shall stand part of the motion, resolved in the affirmative; Bill read 3^a accordingly, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

ANCHORS AND CHAIN CABLES BILL.

House in Committee (according to order): Amendments made: Standing Committee negatived: the Report of Amendments

to be received on Monday next; and Bill to be printed as amended. (No. 134.)

REFORMATORY SCHOOLS AMENDMENT BILL. [Lords.]

Read 3^a (according to order).

*LORD NORTON: My Lords, this Bill is a short one-clause Bill, entirely consisting of reference to a one-clause Act five years old, and is wholly unintelligible without considerable study. But though it is unintelligible, there is no reason why it should be absolute nonsense, and as it now stands it is absolute nonsense. The proviso proposes that where a felon under 16 years of age is sentenced to a reformatory school for five years he shall not, in addition, be sentenced to penal servitude or imprisonment. How can any court send a boy to a reformatory school for five years, and after that sentence him to penal servitude or imprisonment? What would be the use of punishing the boy after the cure is complete? What I propose is to omit the reference to a reformatory school, so that whether the young convict is sent to a reformatory school or not he shall not be punished in prison. The whole object of this Bill is to prevent young criminals being sent to prison. I am told that the exception I make in my Amendment in regard to aggravated cases is unnecessary, because under the present law such offenders are sent to prison and treated as adults. Therefore I do not care whether the words I propose to add are inserted or not. I beg to move my Amendment.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 1, line 14, to leave out from 'Provided that' to 'addition' inclusive, line 16, and insert 'No such offender shall, except in what the court considers an aggravated case.'"—(*The Lord Norton.*)

*LORD LEIGH: My Lords, I regret to say that I cannot accept the Amendment of the noble Lord opposite. If I did so it would make my Bill perfectly useless. The object that I have in view in this simple one-clause Bill would be completely and entirely defeated by the Amendment. What I desire is that magistrates should be compelled to send children, when they are to go to a reformatory, direct to the reformatory without having to undergo preliminary imprisonment. The noble Lord's Amendment would leave it to the magistrates to decide what an aggravated case

is. He has not told us what he means by an aggravated case, and it would be very easy for any magistrate who favoured the sending of children to prison to make out an aggravated case. The noble Lord knows, and, in fact, all your Lordships know, perfectly well that magistrates differ most materially upon the question of the imprisonment of children. One magistrate may strongly advocate imprisonment, and another would equally strongly disapprove of it. Consequently my object in bringing in this Bill is to make it compulsory upon magistrates to send children direct to reformatories without going to prison, and I would urge upon your Lordships to give the Bill a Third Reading without the Amendment proposed by the noble Lord.

*LORD NORTON: I am quite willing to omit the words "except in what the court considers an aggravated case," and I beg to propose my Amendment without those words. My Amendment will then, I contend, carry out what the noble Lord opposite desires, namely, that young offenders be not punished in prisons.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (the Earl of HALSBURY): I cannot help reminding the noble Lord that we are not in Committee, and that he is not entitled to speak twice.

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: My Lords, the views of the Home Office on this Bill are very strong and decided in favour of the words of my noble friend, Lord Leigh, being retained. They are in substance the words contained in the Youthful Offenders Bill, which I recently introduced on behalf of the Government. The Government feel that they cannot give away their own clause, as they would be doing if they accepted the Amendment. Before 1893 magistrates were bound to send every youthful offender who went to a reformatory to prison. Lord Leigh intervened, and asked that youthful offenders should go direct to the reformatory. The Home Office, however, would not then accept that view in its entirety, but gave a discretion to magistrates to send to prison or not as they thought fit. Since 1893 the question has made progress. A Departmental Committee has sat, and the Home Office have been converted by Lord Leigh to the conviction that it is better that

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youthful offenders should go direct to the reformatory and not walk to it through the corridors of a prison, and they therefore wish to take away from the magistrates their discretionary power in the matter. Taking the Amendment of my noble friend Lord Norton as it is on the Paper—and I cannot quite follow his observations—his object is that magistrates should retain that discretion, and if his Amendment were adopted Lord Leigh's Bill would come to nothing. The effect would be that there would be two classes of young persons in the reformatory—those who had gone to prison and those who had not, and during his whole reformatory life the question would be put to a boy, "Are you a prison boy or not?" and there would be that mark and stain upon him if he had been to prison which the Home Office think ought not to exist. How often have we who have practised at the Bar heard the question put to a witness, "Have you been in prison?" and happy indeed is the witness who can say he has not. This is one of the small reasons which have caused the Home Office to desire that youths who are convicted should not suffer imprisonment before being sent to a reformatory, and I have to ask your Lordships to allow Lord Leigh's Bill to be passed without any Amendments.

LORD NORTON: After what has fallen from the noble and learned Lord the Chancellor of the Duchy, I withdraw my Amendment.

Amendment negatived.

Bill passed, and sent to the Commons.

COMMONS AND OPEN SPACES BILL. [SECOND READING.]

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

LORD BURGHCLERE: My Lords, I hope I shall induce your Lordships to give a Second Reading to the measure which I venture to place before you this afternoon. The object of this Bill is to simplify and cheapen the process by which schemes for the regulation of commons are now initiated and become law, and by so doing to facilitate the means by which open spaces and village greens are now protected, preserved, and improved for the benefit and recreation of those who dwell in their vicinity. I am quite sure that the object will have the universal

approval of your Lordships if it can be shown, as I believe it can, that the reform is possible and feasible in a safe and satisfactory manner. First of all I should point out that this Bill is in no sense a Party measure. The most that can be said in that direction is that it was drafted under my direction while I happened to be President of the Board of Agriculture in the late Government, and that in that capacity I presented it to the House of Commons, but the main object of this Bill has long been pressed forward by the Commons Preservation Society, a body which, as your Lordships know, is a non-political one, and contains many men who are opposed to the principles of the Party with which I usually act. This Bill has nothing to do with the question of enclosures, which has been a vexed question for many years, but merely deals with the management of commons. The question of enclosures has given rise to much controversy and several Acts of Parliament. The Commons Act of 1876 was brought in by the noble Viscount the Lord Privy Seal when he was Home Secretary in the Government of 1874, and the question of enclosures has long been dead and buried; its very ghost was laid by Lord Thring when he induced your Lordships to accept his Commons Amendment Act of 1893. I will, with your Lordships' approval, refer to Part 2 of the Bill, which is of a somewhat *omnibus* character. Some of the clauses are of a purely Departmental nature. They were drafted under my direction, because we thought they would be of service to us on the Board of Agriculture; but if the noble Viscount who represents that Board in this House does not think them as serviceable as we did I shall not press them. There are other clauses dealing with matters of procedure which I consider of great practical value, but as they are not absolutely necessary to the principle of the Bill, and may be considered a stumbling block to the passing of it, I do not intend to press them if they receive much objection. Having cleared the ground so far, I will endeavour to explain shortly to your Lordships what this Bill will do. It will, I trust, mainly affect those smaller open spaces and village greens of which we who dwell in the country are so cognisant, and it is really with those in my eye that I particularly press the Bill upon your Lordships' attention. The

procedure of the Act of 1876 is so expensive that small village greens of two or three acres in extent are absolutely prohibited from obtaining the advantages to be derived from a scheme for their regulation. This, I am sure your Lordships will agree, is in itself to be deplored. I will endeavour to give your Lordships an idea of the procedure which has to be gone through in the case of a village green of only two or three acres in extent. I will suppose that everyone in the neighbourhood, including the lord of the manor, are very anxious that the village green should be regulated and improved and used for the purpose of providing recreation for the inhabitants. At the present moment, in order to obtain a scheme, a notice signed by persons representing one-third of the interest in the common has to be published in the local newspapers and sent to the Board of Agriculture. If the Board of Agriculture think a *prima facie* case has been made out, they send down one of their officers to the spot where my typical village green is situated to hold an inquiry, examine witnesses, and make a report. If the report of the officer of the Board of Agriculture is approved by that Board, they have to get the assent of two-thirds of those in the locality interested in the common affected. The Board of Agriculture then proceeds to draw up a Provisional Order embodying the regulations, which they present to the Houses of Parliament. The House of Commons proceeds to refer this Provisional Order and the report of the Board of Agriculture to the Select Committee on Commons—a Standing Committee which, as your Lordships know, is appointed to examine into matters of this sort. That Committee proceeds to have another inquiry. They summon up the officers of the Board of Agriculture, and, if they choose, people from the locality where the common is situated, and hold an exhaustive inquiry, a procedure which involves considerable expense. When the Select Committee on Commons has confirmed the report of the Board of Agriculture it reports to the House of Commons, and a Bill has to be passed through that House and your Lordships' House and receive the Royal Assent. But the procedure does not end there. The Board of Agriculture has then to send a valuer down, who has to make an award, a procedure also involving considerable expense. This cumbersome,

protracted, and expensive process is absolutely necessary at the present time in order to regulate one of the smallest village greens, where everybody interested is perfectly willing that the green should be improved and regulated. Under this Bill I propose to confer power on the district council in the neighbourhood of any open space to make a scheme. That scheme should be in the form provided by the Board of Agriculture for the regulation of the common. Notice of intention to make a scheme must be given, and the council must state where copies of the draft can be obtained. A copy of the draft and plan must also be sent as soon as possible to the Board of Agriculture, and after the expiration of forty days the Department will take into consideration any objections or suggestions made to it. If it passes through that ordeal and goes up to the Board of Agriculture, the latter may, if it chooses, approve of the scheme as it is presented to them, or may make modifications. If they think fit, the Board of Agriculture may also direct an inquiry to be held by an officer of the Department. Then, if the Board of Agriculture approves of the scheme after this exhaustive inquiry, it should become law and have full effect. Under my Bill, I am informed, and I think I am right in saying this, that the whole process would be completed easily in a few weeks, and at a small expense. Under the present law the same process takes eight or nine months, and costs a very large sum of money. I am informed that the minimum sum spent even in securing a scheme for the smallest place, where everybody consents, is not less than £60, and that the maximum is something like £1,500 or £2,000. Every provision is made in the Bill for compensation for any profitable rights of the owner which might be interfered with without his consent. That leads me naturally to the question which I think may be a thorny one, namely, the veto of the lord of the manor. I have taken in my Bill the precedent of the Metropolitan Commons Act of 1866. That was not a very revolutionary period, and perhaps the precedents of that time may be right at this moment, but it may be said that the case in the country districts to which this Bill applies is not exactly the same as in the metropolitan area. But on that point I should like to say that I am quite willing, if the Govern-

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ment think right, that the Bill should be sent to a Select Committee, where evidence might be taken and where discussion will enable a solution to be arrived at which will, I have no doubt, be satisfactory to all. The object I have at heart is to cheapen and simplify the procedure for the regulation of small commons and village greens, so that it may be possible for these open spaces, which tend so largely to the enjoyment of the people in the neighbourhood, to be improved and regulated in a proper manner. If that is carried out, I shall not quarrel with the noble Viscount or any other noble Lord with regard to the veto of the lord of the manor. I hope your lordships will admit that I have not approached this Bill in an unreasonable spirit, and if the noble Viscount the Lord Privy Seal will meet me in a spirit of equal "sweet reasonableness," I have not the slightest doubt that we shall be able, even this session, to place upon the Statute Book this measure, which is not an ambitious one, but one which will be highly useful and practical, and tend to promote the health and happiness of thousands of the inhabitants in rural districts.

Moved, That the Bill be now read 2^a.

***VISCOUNT CROSS:** My Lords, if the Bill does no more than carry out the object which the noble Lord has stated, and which is set forth in the memorandum to the Bill—that of providing simpler and less expensive machinery for regulating commons—it has my sympathy. In the Act of 1876, which I had the honour of passing, the Government wanted not to favour enclosures as they were favoured in former years, but to take up a different line of dealing with them, and all the commons that have been regulated under that Act have given satisfaction to everybody concerned. I am quite aware that experience has shown that not only may the procedure be simplified, but also that a great deal of the expense which has hitherto been incurred may be reduced to a very large extent. One of the great difficulties which causes as much expense as anything else in the present procedure is the necessity of getting the consent of two-thirds of the inhabitants. I understand the noble Lord to object to full notice being given in the newspapers on the ground of expense.

LORD BURGHCLERE: No ; I do not object to that.

***VISCOUNT CROSS** : Although I am quite willing that the procedure should be cheapened, there are other matters of great importance to be considered, which make it necessary that ample notice should be given of any scheme in contemplation. Your Lordships must bear in mind that in dealing with commons you are dealing with persons having absolute rights of ownership. Not only the lord of the manor, but also the commoners have rights, and it is a new thing to suggest that these rights should be taken away without the consent of Parliament. The procedure might be simplified; the two-thirds majority might be rendered unnecessary; but the taking away of rights is a matter for Parliament, and this should be made quite clear in the Bill. I understood the noble Lord to say that he was not averse to recognising the rights of the lord of the manor, and did not wish to take away his veto.

LORD BURGHCLERE : The Bill as it stands does take away the veto of the lord of the manor, because it follows the precedent of the Metropolitan Commons Act, 1866.

***VISCOUNT CROSS** : I am not going to defend the Metropolitan Commons Act, a great part of which is objectionable; but so far as the lord of the manor is concerned, it is quite clear that his rights must be protected. The noble Lord said that ample compensation would be given under Clause 7, but I have my doubts upon that point. Dealing with the Land Clauses Act is very different to coming before Parliament and stating one's case. There is another clause which I think will give rise to great injustice as it is at present drawn—namely, the clause relating to the adjustment of rights. In dealing with the adjustment of rights you are touching matters of great difficulty and great delicacy. I do not mean to say that the clause may not be amended, and I hope to submit proposals for its amendment should the Bill be read a second time. I am content that the Bill should receive a Second Reading, and I hope the noble Lord will accept the Amendments I shall place upon the Notice Paper, by which the main object may be secured and the risk of injustice removed. Commons are not the property of the public, but of private

persons, and their rights should not be interfered with unless some public necessity is shown. I do not understand why the noble Lord has included in his Bill metropolitan commons; they are dealt with under a special Act, and I think they should remain under that Act, by which they are satisfactorily dealt with.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY : I am glad to find that the noble Viscount is willing to accept the Second Reading of this Bill. I am not going into details upon this Bill, but I think there will be general agreement in the desire that for the better regulation of small commons and village greens a simple and not costly procedure should be provided. At the same time, although I have not any intimate acquaintance with those parts of England which are different from that in which I live, I should say that for large tracts of common land, especially in the North of England, the situation is somewhat difficult, and I can conceive difficult questions arising to which the procedure suggested in this Bill would not be applicable. I hope my noble friend will proceed with the Bill, and that it may be a useful measure as applied to the smaller places of which he has spoken.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN : My Lords, I do not rise for the purpose of offering any adverse criticism of this Bill. While agreeing with its general object, I take exception to the provision for management and the distribution of cost. Generally speaking the body most interested is the parish council; the county will have no general interest, and when a common is situated in the areas of two or more district councils the charge for upkeep and management should be upon the districts within which the common is situated. When the Bill is in Committee care should be taken that those who benefit by the regulation of commons should be those who pay for it, and not the county council or the district, for the latter may be a large district with no interest in the common in question.

On Question, agreed to

Bill read 2^a (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the whole House.

QUESTIONS.

STATUE OF MR. CANNING.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH: My Lords, I rise to ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will consider the expediency of removing the statue of Mr. Canning to a more convenient site than that which it at present occupies. For a long time past my attention has been called to the position of the statue of Mr. Canning, and I intended some years ago, when the late Lord Granville was in this House, to draw his attention to it in the hope that some change would be effected. But I did not do so because I did not consider my opinion would carry much weight in your Lordships' House, and another reason for not calling attention to the matter was that the site which I had selected was one which I thought the then Government would have objected to use for the purpose. The statue to which I refer is, in the opinion of those most competent to judge, one of the best in London. In its present position at this period of the year it is almost hidden from view by the trees which surround it, and I believe that not one Londoner in a hundred, if asked the question, could say where the statue of Canning is to be found. The site which I had selected on the north side of Westminster Hall is now laid out as a garden, and it occurred to me that it was hardly likely that the Government would adopt my suggestion to place the statue there. But I have since learned that the Government have agreed that the statue of Oliver Cromwell should be placed on that very spot, and that is the reason why I now bring the subject before your Lordships' House. I am quite ready to admit that Oliver Cromwell was a great man, or perhaps I should say one of the most extraordinary men ever heard of in the history of this country. But if there was one thing for which Oliver Cromwell was more remarkable than another, it was his overthrow, not only of the House of Commons, but also of your Lordships' House, and it seems to me a ludicrous perversion of history to select that very site for a statue of a man who overthrew both Houses of Parliament, when there are many sites in London where his statue might be placed without offence to anyone. It would be almost as ridiculous to place his statue there as to place a statue of George III. opposite the White

House at Washington, or to put a statue of Louis XVI. opposite the Elysée in Paris. The site, if it should be adopted by the Government, is one certainly quite fitting for the statue of so great a man as Mr. Canning, as it would be close to the place where his fame was acquired, and he would be surrounded by those who have distinguished themselves in both Houses of Parliament. At present he is separated from his colleagues and those who shone in the same sphere as himself. There is another site, should Her Majesty's Government object to the site I have mentioned—namely, in Parliament Square, facing the entrance to Westminster Hall. Either of these two sites would be preferable to the one on which the statue at present stands.

*THE EARL OF PEMBROKE AND MONTGOMERY: On behalf of my right hon. friend the First Commissioner of Works I have to say that it is perfectly true that, owing to the growth of the trees in the neighbourhood of Mr. Canning's statue, the statue is at the present time considerably hidden. The First Commissioner of Works has experienced great difficulty in finding a better site for this statue, mainly owing to its size, it being much larger than any of the other statues of public men in Parliament Square. It would be impossible, therefore, to place it in Parliament Square. The noble Lord, I think, first of all suggested that it should be placed in the new garden at the north side of Westminster Hall, but he has since heard that the Government have decided to put the statue of Oliver Cromwell there. I may tell the noble Lord that that decision is not the decision of Her Majesty's present advisers. The site was selected by the First Commissioner of Works under the last Government, and, as the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury said in reply to a question in another place, the present Government are not responsible for the site and do not propose to make any alteration in the arrangements which have been come to by their predecessors. I do not wish to enter into the question of the desirability of placing the statue of Oliver Cromwell on this site, but it may be that its position there might point a moral as to the mortality of man, however great, and the imperishable nature of our institutions. As to the noble Lord's suggestion that the statue should

be erected in Palace Yard, I remember some years ago I applied to the then First Commissioner of Works—Mr. Shaw Lefevre—suggesting that the statue of Lord Beaconsfield might be put up inside the railings in Palace Yard. I was informed that the Department could not countenance the idea of having statues inside the railings of Palace Yard. The noble Lord also suggested that the statue might be erected in the centre of Palace Yard, opposite the main entrance. If it were so erected there would be considerable objection owing to the number of vehicles which are constantly in and out, and especially on occasions when Mr. Speaker has his dinners and levees. I may mention that it is proposed to lop the branches of the trees which now surround the statue, and when that is done I think the statue will show out extremely well.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH: The size of the statue is the very reason why it should stand alone. The proper site for it is below Westminster Hall, where it would not be dwarfed by nor dwarf any other statues.

THE DUKE OF RUTLAND: My Lords, I agree with the noble Viscount. that owing to the size of the statue of Canning it ought to stand alone. That is exactly what it does on its present site. I happened to be First Commissioner of Works at the time the statue was removed from its original site. It was absolutely necessary to remove it because the Underground Railway was laid under the spot where it stood, and the engineering experts gave it as their opinion that it was not safe to leave it there. The Government of the day came to the conclusion that the place where it now stands was the most fitting place for it to be removed to. Although it is not close to the statues of other British statesmen, it, as it were, heads them, and is sufficiently near them to form part of the group. The present site has two advantages, one positive and the other negative. A much-frequented road runs in front of the statue, so that everyone passing has a view of it, but nobody can see the statue from the rear. If any of your Lordships doubt the value of that advantage I would ask him to saunter slowly down the bottom of Regent Street and Waterloo Place with his eye fixed on the rear of

the Guards' statue. He will, I am sure, come to the conclusion that it is expedient, if possible, that the rear of our statues should not be brought into any great prominence. Therefore, my Lords, on this ground I still think, although I am, in the opinion of the noble Viscount, the original criminal, that it would be best to let well alone in this matter. When the trees about the statue are lopped I believe the people of London will be quite content with the statue remaining where it is.

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH: I shall ask Her Majesty's Government on a future occasion whether they will adhere to the decision to allow Cromwell's statue to be placed on the spot to which I have referred.

*THE EARL OF PEMBROKE AND MONTGOMERY: I thought I had answered that question. The First Lord of the Treasury said in the other House that the site was not chosen by the present Government, and that they did not intend to interfere with the decision of their predecessors.

House adjourned at a quarter past
Six of the clock till To-morrow,
half-past Ten of the clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 22nd June 1899.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 14) BILL.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon), who had on the Paper the following notice—

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee to whom the Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 14) Bill is committed to take the evidence tendered by or on behalf of residents in the district of Rhyl upon the question of the powers proposed by the Bill to be given to the Rhyl District Council to make bye-laws in respect of the foreshore and sands. That all petitions against the Rhyl Provisional Order by or on behalf of the residents in the district of Rhyl, presented three clear days before the meeting of the Committee be referred to the Committee. That the petitioners praying to be heard by themselves, their counsel, or agents, be heard against the Bill. That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records,"

intimated that he would postpone the Motion till Tuesday next.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): As the Ramsgate Order, to which no objection is taken, is included in this Bill, I strongly object to its being hung up.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (South Tyrone): I do not like to object, but if the Bill is delayed until Tuesday it may be too late for consideration in the House of Lords.

MR. SPEAKER: Under the Standing Order the Motion will go over until to-morrow.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER: I hope it will be taken to-morrow. There will be plenty of time in another place to raise any objection.

PRIVATE BILLS. [Lords.]

(Standing Orders not previously inquired into complied with.)

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz. :—

OYSTERMOUTH RAILWAY OR TRAM-ROAD BILL. [Lords.]

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

ABERDEEN CORPORATION BILL. [Lords.]

(Queen's Consent signified),—read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

ALL SAINTS' CHURCH (CARDIFF) BILL. [Lords.]

(By Order),—read a second time, and committed.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (GAS) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 9) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 11) BILL.

PIER AND HARBOUR PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL.

Read the third time, and passed.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 4) BILL.

As amended, considered; to be read the third time To-morrow.

BURGH POLICE (SCOTLAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER.

Bill to confirm a Provisional Order under the Burgh Police (Scotland) Act, 1892, relating to Paisley Corporation Gas Supply, ordered to be brought in by the Lord Advocate and Mr. Anstruther.

Ordered, That Standing Order 193A be suspended, and that the Bill be read the first time.—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

BURGH POLICE (SCOTLAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

"To confirm a Provisional Order under the Burgh Police (Scotland) Act, 1892, relating to Paisley Corporation Gas Supply," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 246.]

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP L).

Sir William Houldsworth reported from the Committee on Group L of Private Bills, that the Parties opposing the Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 10) Bill had stated that the evidence of Frederick Steevens, Acting Town Clerk of Bradford, was essential to their case; and, it having been proved that his attendance could not be procured without the intervention of the House, he had been instructed to move that the said Frederick Steevens do attend the said Committee upon Monday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock, and do produce all correspondence between him and the Local Government Board, or any inspector or officer of that Board, since the local inquiry held in the month of March last before an inspector of the said Board, in the case of the Bradford (Yorks.) (Sewage Lands) Order proposed to be confirmed by the Bill, and especially all letters relating or referring to an Amendment of the Schedule to the said Order of the Lands with reference to which the said Order purports to empower the mayor, aldermen, and citizens of the city of Bradford (Yorks.), acting by the Council, to put in force the powers of the Lands Clauses Acts with respect to the purchase and taking of lands otherwise than by agreement.

Ordered, That Frederick Stevens do attend the said Committee on Group L of Private Bills upon Monday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock, and produce the said documents.

WARRINGTON CORPORATION BILL.

Special Report from the Select Committee on Police and Sanitary Regulations Bills in respect of the Warrington Corporation Bill brought up and read.

WARRINGTON CORPORATION BILL.

Reported from the Select Committee on Police and Sanitary Regulations Bills, with Amendments.

Report and Special Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

LEEDS CORPORATION BILL.

Reported from the Select Committee on Police and Sanitary Regulations Bills, with Amendments.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

MENSTONE WATER BILL.

Reported, with Amendments.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to,—

Amendment to—

Friends' Provident Institution Bill [Lords].

Amendments to—

Skipton Urban District Gas Bill [Lords], without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under The Tramways Act, 1870, relating to Aberdeen Corporation Tramways, Devonport Corporation Tramways, Halifax Corporation Tramways, Matlock Urban District Tramways, Perth and District Tramways, and Reading Corporation Tramways." [Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill. [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act for conferring further powers on the Glasgow VOL. LXXIII. [FOURTH SERIES.]

and South-Western Railway Company; for the construction of works and the acquisition of lands; for vesting in them the undertakings of the Largs Harbour Company and the Kilmarnock and Troon Railway Company; for making provision with reference to the election of Rothesay Harbour Trustees; for empowering the Company to raise additional capital; and for other purposes." [Glasgow and South Western Railway Bill [Lords.]

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to empower the Wolverhampton Tramways Company, Limited, to alter the gauge of certain of their tramways, and to work the same by mechanical power; and for other purposes." [Wolverhampton Tramways Bill. [Lords.]

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to amend the Constitution of the Owens College, Manchester; for conferring further powers on the President and Governors; and for other purposes." [Owens College, Manchester, Bill. [Lords.]

TRAMWAY ORDERS CONFIRMATION (No. 1) BILL. [Lords.]

Read the first time; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 247.]

GLASGOW AND SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY BILL. [Lords.]

WOLVERHAMPTON TRAMWAYS BILL. [Lords.]

OWENS COLLEGE, MANCHESTER, BILL. [Lords.]

Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Nairn, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF FOOD AND DRUGS BILL.

Petition from Glasgow and other places, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING ACTS, 1882 TO 1890 (PROCEEDINGS).

Copy presented, of Report by the Board of Trade respecting the Applications to and Proceedings of the Board under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882 to 1890, during the past year [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 237.]

ARMY (LENGTH OF SERVICE AND AGES OF MEN IN EACH UNIT).

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 8th June; *Mr. Arnold-Forsler*]; to lie upon the Table.

ARMY (LENGTH OF SERVICE AND AGES OF MEN IN NEW BATTERIES OF ROYAL ARTILLERY).

Return presented, — relative thereto [Address 8th June; *Mr. Arnold-Forsler*]; to lie upon the Table.

PROSECUTION OF OFFENCES ACTS, 1879 AND 1884.

Return presented, — relative thereto [Address 2nd June; *Mr. Jesse Collings*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 238.]

EDUCATION (SCIENCE AND ART SCHOOLS).

Copy presented, — of Directory for the year 1899, with Regulations for establishing and conducting Science and Art Schools and Classes [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (FEES FOR PAUPER CHILDREN).

Return presented, — relative thereto [ordered 15th May; *Mr. Charles Morley*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 239.]

NAVY (EXCEPTIONS TO QUEEN'S REGULATIONS).

Copy presented — of List of Exceptions to the Queen's Regulations as to Pay, Non-effective Pay, and Allowances during the year 1898-9 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

GREENWICH OBSERVATORY.

Copy presented, — of Report of the Astronomer Royal to the Board of Visitors of the Royal Observatory, Greenwich [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EGYPT (No. 5, 1899).

Copy presented, — of Despatch from Her Majesty's Agent and Consul General at Cairo, inclosing a Report on the Soudan by Sir William Garstin, K.C.M.G. [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES.)

Copies presented, — of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 2293 and 2294 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS.

QUARTERMASTER-GENERAL'S BRANCH OF THE WAR OFFICE.

MR. MOON (St. Pancras, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the appointment of staff paymaster in the Quartermaster-General's Branch of the War Office is a staff appointment within the meaning of Article 69 of the Royal Warrant for Pay and Promotion of the Army, 1898; and for how long the present occupant, who was appointed on 21st August, 1893, is to hold it.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (MR. G. WYNDHAM, Dover): This appointment is not technically a staff appointment, but it is governed by the rule laid down in Article 69; that is to say, it terminates after five years, "unless extended under special circumstances." The present occupant was appointed from 21st December, 1894.

RECRUITING IN PUBLIC-HOUSES.

MR. SOUTTAR (Dumfriesshire): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that much of the recruiting in the provinces is carried on in connection with public-houses, the recruiting sergeant being sometimes even the publican; and whether some other arrangement could be made.

*MR. WYNDHAM: There are strict regulations against recruiting in connection with public-houses. If the hon. Member will draw attention to any case in which this rule is seriously violated inquiry will be made.

CASE OF DOMINICK HOGAN.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War

Office whether his attention has been drawn to the case of Dominick Hogan, an Army pensioner, now 76 years of age, who enlisted in Nenagh, county Tipperary, in 1842, in the 64th Regiment, and served 22 years and eight months, 15 years of which was foreign service, holding medal and clasp for service in Persia, medal and clasp for service in the Indian Mutiny, and medal and clasp for China, and also a discharge of good character and conduct, having served with honours in 26 general and 100 principal engagements, having been eight and a-half years in action; whether he is aware that Hogan was discharged at Raglan Barracks, Devonport, in 1864, on a pension of only 8½d. per day; and whether, under the Soldiers' Deferred Pension Act, he is entitled to an additional 4d. per day, having served over 21 years, and having attained the age of 60; and whether, owing to his long service and distinguished career, the War Office authorities will make some provision for Dominick Hogan so as to enable him to spend the remaining few years outside an Irish workhouse.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS, Birmingham, S.): Hogan's case has been repeatedly considered. Although he was given a good character on discharge his service was not of such a nature as to entitle him to any good conduct badges, and consequently he is entitled to a pension of 8½d. a day only. He is not entitled to any deferred pension.

MR. FLAVIN: What is the difference between a good conduct badge and the three medals and three clasps which this man has?

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: I am willing to explain that to the hon. Member privately.

MR. FLAVIN: Has the hon. Gentleman no assistance to give these pensioners except the Irish workhouse?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

ARMY HEADQUARTERS ADMINISTRATION.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office if he is able to state when the Report of the Committee of

Experts on the Administration of the Headquarters of the Army, of which he is the chairman, will be presented to the Secretary of State; and whether it is the intention of the Committee to invite the evidence of Members of this House who have served in the Army at home and abroad.

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: The Committee to which the hon. Member refers is appointed to inquire into the Civil Establishment of the War Office, and the inquiry, though it has made considerable progress, is yet incomplete. It is impossible at present to say when a Report will be presented to the Secretary of State. The answer to the last paragraph of the question is in the negative.

OUTRAGE BY BRITISH SOLDIERS IN RANGOON.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the woman who was outraged at Rangoon by sixteen soldiers of the West Kent Regiment is dead; why was the fact of her death, which was announced in the *Star* of the 31st May and the *Bombay Champion* of the 4th June, withheld from the knowledge of the Secretary of State; and whether the West Kent Regiment is still stationed in Rangoon.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): I have ascertained that the woman who is alleged to have been outraged at Rangoon is not dead. The outrage is stated to have happened on the 2nd April; and at the trial of Private Horrocks on the 10th May the woman gave evidence in court. The West Kent Regiment is still at Rangoon.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: And is it to be allowed to remain there after this?

LORD G. HAMILTON: I think it would be most unwise to remove the regiment until we are in full possession of the facts.

INDIAN STAFF CORPS.

COLONEL WELBY (Taunton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India, with reference to the regulation that candidates for the Indian Staff Corps must not be more than 25 years old, and must

have served at least one year in a European regiment, whether he can see his way to extending the age limit by two or three years in the case of officers promoted from the ranks, as this regulation shuts out the greater number of these, owing to the length of time they have to serve in the ranks before obtaining a commission.

***LORD G. HAMILTON** : The maximum limit of age for admission to the Indian Staff Corps was adopted in the general interests of the Service, and I do not think it expedient to extend it in order to facilitate the admission of a particular class of officers, which would have the effect of excluding officers of a more suitable age. There is an ample supply of officers under the present conditions—in fact, there is considerable competition for admission to the Indian Staff Corps.

THE MECCA PILGRIMS.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL : I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what steps have been taken, or are about to be taken, by Her Majesty's Government to secure the safe conduct of British Indian subjects between Jeddah and the cities of Mecca and Medina, whilst on the customary pilgrimage to the Mohammedan shrines; and whether compensation has been demanded, or will be demanded, by the British Government from the Porte for outrages committed upon British subjects in Arabia in the years 1895, 1896, 1897, and 1898, whilst performing religious duties in the Hedjaz.

***THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS** (**MR. BRODRICK**, Surrey, Guildford) : Her Majesty's Government have taken and will continue to take all steps in their power to insure the protection of the British Indian pilgrims. As regards paragraph 2, demands have been made for compensation for robberies committed between 1892 and 1898, and some progress appears to have been made towards an arrangement.

THE KOW SHING DISASTER.

COLONEL DENNY (Kilmarnock Burghs) : I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can give any further information about the progress being made in the negotiations with the Chinese Government in regard to compensation for the relatives

of those whose lives were lost in the Kow Shing disaster.

***MR. BRODRICK** : There has been no progress since the statement made by me on February 20th, in reply to a question on the subject. On the 9th ultimo a Note was addressed to the Chinese Minister, in which the hope was expressed that he would soon be in a position to communicate the reply of his Government to our proposal that the claim for compensation should be referred to arbitration.

THE CONSTANTINOPLE RIOTS.

COLONEL DENNY : I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is now able to give any further information as to the reported settlement by the authorities at Constantinople of the American claims on account of loss during the recent disturbances in Constantinople.

***MR. BRODRICK** : The information we have received on this subject gives us no reason to suppose that the claims alluded to have been settled.

BUNDER ABBAS.

***SIR HENRY MEYSEY-THOMPSON** (Stafford, Handsworth) : I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he has any information whether the Russian Government have obtained the lease of Bunder Abbas, in the Persian Gulf, from the Persian Government for a term of years.

***MR. BRODRICK** : No, Sir, no such information has been received.

GIBRALTAR.

MR. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye) : I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has now been able to consider the evidence collected in Gibraltar last year from trustworthy witnesses with regard to the urgent necessity for adopting measures for the improvement of the sanitary condition of the city and fortress of Gibraltar; whether Her Majesty's Government, having regard to the importance of providing proper accommodation for the naval and military forces which may from time to time be employed there, will take steps to prevent the grant of leases of Crown lands to private persons or to companies engaged in building speculations; and whether they will consider the desirability of demolishing the

buildings which are stated to be a danger to health.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): I have considered the Report of the Committee appointed last year by the Secretary of State for War to consider the question of improving the sanitary condition of Gibraltar, and the evidence taken by them. It is proposed, in dealing with Crown lands in Gibraltar, as leases fall in to have regard to the requirements for the accommodation for naval and military officers. The Sanitary Commissioners for Gibraltar have and exercise the power of ordering the destruction of buildings found to be actually dangerous to health; there are also other buildings which it may be desirable to remove with a view to prevent the overcrowding of the city and fortress, and Her Majesty's Government are considering how this may be done.

BRITISH INDIANS IN THE TRANSVAAL.

SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN (Banffshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has received a petition, dated May last, from British Indian traders in the South African Republic, complaining that they have been ordered to remove, by the 1st of July, to locations at a distance from their places of business; whether the alleged necessity for such removal is sanitation; whether he will cause inquiry to be made whether this removal is really required on sanitary grounds; and, if so, whether the removal is being effected in the way least liable to cause hardship and loss to those affected; and whether Sir A. Milner made any representation regarding the grievances of British Indian traders at the recent Conference with the President of the South African Republic.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I have not yet received from the High Commissioner the petition of which a copy has been placed in my hands by the hon. Baronet. The facts are as follow: A law was enacted in the South African Republic in 1885 with the consent of Her Majesty's Government, which empowered the Government of the South African Republic for sanitary purposes to assign streets, wards, and locations for habitation by Asiatics. A difference arose between Her Majesty's Government and the Transvaal

Government as to the scope of the law, and they referred the matter to the arbitration of the Chief Justice of the Orange Free State, who decided that the Government of the South African Republic were entitled to carry out the law, subject solely to the interpretation of the courts of the Transvaal. Her Majesty's Government accepted the award, but reserved the right to make friendly representations to the South African Republic with a view to more generous treatment of the Indians. No action was taken by the Government of the South African Republic pending the decision by the Court of a test case, which was to settle whether the Government had the right to assign to the Indians places for business as well as for residence. The decision was given in August last, and was in favour of the Government of the South African Republic. Sir Alfred Milner, when he returned in February last, was instructed to endeavour to effect some arrangement favourable to the Indians, but the Government of the South African Republic declined to make any arrangement unless Her Majesty's Government were prepared to surrender certain rights of the Cape boys and other coloured persons. Sir Alfred Milner was then instructed at the beginning of May to ask in a friendly way for the favourable consideration of, at least, the better class of Indians, if not of all, suggesting the possibility of creating an Asiatic quarter within each town, and pointing out that the sanitary considerations on which the law is based cannot be applicable to all Indians without distinction. Notice had, however, in the meantime been issued by the Government of the South African Republic requiring the Indian traders to remove to places assigned to them by the 1st of July. The latest information shows that these locations have been assigned inside the towns at twenty-two places in the Republic, but that in Pretoria and Johannesburg the Government intend to compel the Indians to live in locations outside the town, but propose that a block of ground shall be set aside for a certain number of them for trading purposes inside the town. With a view to obtaining equitable treatment of the Indians Her Majesty's Government have used every friendly means left open to them by their predecessors' acceptance of the law of 1885, by the indefinite terms in which that law is

couched, and by the difficulty and uncertainty of the result of appeals to the law courts of the Republic. The matter is one of a number in which the views and wishes of Her Majesty's Government and that of the South African Republic are not in accord, and which would have been brought forward by Sir A. Milner at the Bloemfontein Conference had the discussion proceeded beyond the question of the franchise.

THE METRIC SYSTEM.

SIR SAMUEL MONTAGU (Tower Hamlets, Whitechapel): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been drawn to the sixth Report from Mr. T. Worthington on British trade in South America, containing a paragraph to the following effect:—That the metric system is the only one recognised; that an English foot rule cannot be legally imported, and that our trade suffers greatly by not adopting compulsorily the metric system used by almost all the civilised nations of the world; whether he has seen the Consular Report on the trade of Amsterdam issued last month, to the effect that, unless we adopt the metric system of weights and measures, we may look on the Continental and perhaps on other markets as lost to us; and whether he will facilitate the adoption of the metrical system in this country by using metrical weights and measures in the Government Departments.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): Yes, Sir, my attention has been directed to the matter referred to in my hon. friend's question. As the House is aware, there is now no reason why any manufacturer or trader in this country may not carry on his foreign trade in terms of metric weights and measures. I am in communication with some Government Departments on the concluding paragraph of the hon. Baronet's question.

LOANS TO COLONIES.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he will give a return stating the names of the colonies, &c., to which the Colonial Loans Fund Bill would apply, the revenue of each of these colonies, the different heads under which revenue is raised, and particulars of present debts of

each colony, &c., showing amount of interest, nature of sinking fund, &c.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EX-CHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, W.): A return such as is asked for will be given in respect of the colonies to which it is proposed to apply the Act this year.

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he can give a list of the loans which it is proposed to make this year in pursuance of the Colonial Loans Fund Bill. In putting this I would further ask the right hon. Gentleman if he does not think it would be fair to the House to give us this information before we finally pass the Colonial Loans Fund Bill.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I do not think that has anything to do with it. A list of the loans which it is proposed to make this year will be contained in the schedule to a Bill which the Government proposes to introduce as soon as the Colonial Loans Fund Bill is passed.

THE METROPOLITAN POLICE.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether it has been brought to his notice that every week men with less than two years' service leave the Metropolitan Police force; and whether he can state the total number of men with less than two years' service who have left during the past year, and how this compares with the number of those who left with the same amount of service ten years ago.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir M. WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): Men of short service (not limited to two years, but from three months upwards) leave the force every week, and have always done so for fairly obvious reasons. There has not been time to ascertain the proportion of men of not more than two years' service who resigned voluntarily during the years mentioned in the question.

MARGARINE FACTORIES.

MR. ARTHUR MOORE (London-derry): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Returns of Margarine Factories

registered under the Margarine Act, 1887, will be ready.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. JESSE COLLINGS, Birmingham, Bordesley): I am informed that the English portion of this Return (which involves applications to 250 local authorities) will be ready in about a month. The Irish portion of the Return will be ready about the same time, and the Scotch portion is already complete.

BECKENHAM (NOTTINGHAMSHIRE) SCHOOL GRANT.

MR. PEEKS (Lincolnshire, S.): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education will he explain why the School Board of Beckenham (Nottinghamshire), which has maintained an efficient school for the education of the parish in temporary premises since April, 1898, has not yet received a grant; and what are the objections to the school being at once admitted to the annual grant list, and a grant to the school being paid from the time of the opening of the school by the Board.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL ON EDUCATION (Sir J. GORST, Camb. University): The school has not yet received a grant because the old National School premises, in which it is conducted, and which were erected with the aid of a building grant, have not been transferred to the Board under Section 23 of the Elementary Education Act, 1870. The Board now proposes to erect an entirely new school, and meanwhile to occupy temporary premises which the Department has conditionally agreed to sanction. On hearing that the Board accept these conditions the Department will be prepared to consider a claim to annual grant as from the date of the Board's first occupation of the National School premises.

LIVERPOOL POST OFFICE STAFF.

MR. CHARLES M'ARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster-General, whether he is aware that at the Liverpool Post Office there are 260 postal clerks with 79 superior appointments, and 365 telegraphists with but 57 superior appointments; whether 46 postal clerks are now at their maximum

salary, and 68 telegraphists are in like position, the former having an average length of service of 20 years, while the latter have an average of 22 years' service; and whether, in view of the fact that Mr. Fawcett and the Tweedmouth Committee recommended that the two services should be placed upon an equality, some revision of the Liverpool telegraph service will take place.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HANBURY, Preston): The answer to the first paragraph is yes; but the number of sorting clerks at their maximum is 29, not 16. Mr. Fawcett recommended common scales for sorting clerks and telegraphists at provincial post offices, but his scheme did not contemplate the possibility of providing an equal flow of promotion in the two establishments. The Tweedmouth Committee recognised that the existence of more superior appointments on the postal side than on the telegraph side of the service was unavoidable, as there is on the postal side a greater necessity for supervising officers, and the number of superior appointments in both branches must be regulated by the requirements of the service. The requirements of the telegraph service at Liverpool were specially examined last year in accordance with the general undertaking given by the Postmaster-General and myself, and a considerable addition was made to the number of superior telegraph appointments. There is no necessity at present for a further revision.

IRISH POST OFFICES ON LICENSED PREMISES.

MR. PINKERTON (Galway): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster-General, if he is prepared to lay upon the Table a Return of the number of post offices in Ireland held by publicans or in licensed premises.

MR. HANBURY: I can give the hon. Member this information now. The number of post offices in Ireland which are situated in premises licensed for the sale of spirits, wine, or beer is at present as follows:—On licences: head offices, 1; sub offices, 226-227. Off licences: head offices, 2; sub-offices, 19-21. Total 248.

TELEGRAPHIC COMMUNICATION WITH LANESBOROUGH.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster-General, in view of the fact that at present a line of telegraph is being laid from Longford to Kenagh, and with very small additional expense could also be laid to Lanesborough, and that the latter place is now a port of call for the Shannon lake steamers, whether he will recommend that, for the convenience of tourists and others, the telegraph line be continued to Lanesborough.

MR. HANBURY: A telegraph extension to Lanesborough shall be carried out if the ordinary guarantee is given.

CAVAN POST OFFICE.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster-General, what progress has been made with the erection of a new post office for Cavan; is it nearly completed; and when the postal authorities expect it to be opened for public service.

MR. HANBURY: The Post Office informs me that the new post office at Cavan was completed and opened for the public service on the 4th of February last year.

RETIRED OFFICERS AND CIVIL APPOINTMENTS UNDER THE CROWN.

CAPTAIN NORTON: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, referring to the Return for the year ended 31st March, 1898, of the Army and Navy officers permitted under Rule 2 of the Regulations drawn up under Section 6 of the Superannuation Act of 1887 to hold civil employment of profit under the public Departments, he is aware that owing to a deduction of 60 per cent. the Director of Transports, pages 18 and 19, Case 13, is serving for £400 a year, while his assistant has 50 per cent. deducted and is serving for a salary exactly the same as his chief; and whether he can explain why the offices of Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, pages 2 and 3, Case 8, and Keeper of the Regalia, pages 10 and 11, Case 7, are exempt from deductions.

MR. HANBURY: The Director of Transports is not serving for £400 a year. His salary is £1,000, and so long

as he holds the office he is not entitled to retired pay in addition. The salary attached to the post of Assistant Director of Transports is not £400, but £700 to £800 a year, and no deduction is made either of 50 per cent. or any other amount. The cases referred to in the second paragraph are explained in the last column of the Return. Appointments in Her Majesty's Household are exempted from the usual deduction.

ROSSLEA TELEGRAPH SERVICE.

MR. JORDAN (Fermanagh, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster-General, if his attention has been called to the necessity of a telegraph office in the town of Rosslea, in the county of Fermanagh; and will he give his consideration to the request of the people of that locality.

MR. HANBURY: A telegraph office at Rosslea was offered on the usual guarantee terms in 1894, and nothing more was heard of the matter until within the last few days, when an application was received from the Clones Rural District Council. This application is under consideration, but the extension if granted must be, of course, under the usual guarantee.

"THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES."

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that Mr. Bussy, who contracted with Her Majesty's Government to print and publish the Parliamentary Reports of the Debates during the present session, was prepaid by libraries and by private individuals the sum of five guineas to furnish them with the said Reports; that Mr. Bussy is bankrupt, and the persons who prepaid in advance are now required to make a further payment in order to obtain the Reports since the bankruptcy occurred; and whether, in view of the connection between Her Majesty's Government and Mr. Bussy, some arrangement can be made by which those who prepaid shall receive the Reports of Debates during the present session without further payment.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid.): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers I have to ask whether the reporters on the Staff of the Official Debates who have done the work should not have the

first claim to consideration in respect of their arrears of salary.

MR. HANBURY : In reply to the question of the hon. Member for Mid Lanark, I did my best to secure that payment should be made to the reporters, but I found that when the contractor became bankrupt it was impossible to give preference to one set of creditors over the other. In reply to the question on the Paper, the answer to the first paragraph is "Yes." Legally there is no claim whatever upon the Stationery Office in this case, any more than in the case of the failure of any other contractor. The contract was admittedly a remunerative one, and the bankruptcy was due to causes not connected with it. At the same time everything that can be done to protect the interests of those who (somewhat unnecessarily) paid the subscription in advance shall be done.

CAPTAIN NORTON : Will any further efforts be made to do something for the reporters, many of whom have lost sums varying from £50 to £100 ?

MR. HANBURY : Under the Bankruptcy law it is impossible to give preference to one set of creditors.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.) : But in proceedings in connection with bankruptcy, are not servants, who have a claim in respect of wages, in quite a different position ?

MR. HANBURY : That is a question which will have to be decided by the Official Receiver. It has nothing to do with the Treasury.

MR. CALDWELL : My question was whether the Government could not extend some consideration to the reporters ?

MR. HANBURY : I am afraid we cannot bear all the sins of all our contractors.

THE CARLINGFORD MEMBER OF THE LOUTH COUNTY COUNCIL.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) : I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether his attention has been called to the case of a contractor under the Louth County Council, in the Carlingford Division, persisting in acting as a district councillor in the division in which his contract subsists ; is this lawful ; and, if not, do the Government propose themselves to prosecute for such

offences as in all other cases, or is it to be left to private prosecutors ; and, if so, why is a departure from the usual Irish practice in respect of offences to be made.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.) : The practice up to now has been not to institute a prosecution in cases of this kind which arose under the Poor Law at the expense of the Crown. But the whole matter is under the consideration of the Government, and I would ask the hon. Member to postpone his question for a week.

THE CASE OF BRIDGET HARRIGAN.

MR. MORRIS (Kilkenny, S.) : I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether he is aware that a tramp, named Bridget Harrigan, pleaded guilty to an indictment for perjury in connection with a false charge of a criminal nature which she brought against a farmer, Mr. R. Bolger, of Garryduff, county Kilkenny, but that, notwithstanding her confession of guilt, she was released without punishment ; also that the police, on her unsupported testimony, caused Mr. Bolger to be summarily arrested and sent for trial to the Assizes, although, as events proved, the smallest inquiry would have shown that the charge was false ; can any reason be assigned for the discharge of Bridget Harrigan ; will the Crown consider whether the heavy expense to which Mr. Bolger was put by his arrest and trial can be provided for ; and why did the Crown originally refuse to prosecute the woman until Mr. Bolger's action compelled them to do so.

MR. ATKINSON : The facts are as follows. On the 7th July, 1897, Bridget Harrigan reported to the police that she had been criminally assaulted by Mr. Bolger, who was at once arrested and on the following day returned for trial at Assizes by a local justice of the peace. There was absolutely no corroboration of the woman's story, and although a Roman Catholic clergyman and several other persons were ready to prove that Mr. Bolger was in another place at the time of the alleged assault, the justice referred to refused to take any evidence for the defence. The matter was thereupon reported to the Government, who issued directions that the Crown should enter a *nolle prosequi* at Assizes. Mr. Bolger was in-

formed of this, and he did not attend the Assizes. In August a solicitor on behalf of Mr. Bolger applied to the magistrates at Petty Sessions for a warrant for the arrest of the woman on a charge of perjury. The district inspector, acting on the invariable rule in such cases, informed the magistrates he could not take any steps in this case until he consulted the authorities. He applied for instructions, and the Government directed the Crown Solicitor to prosecute the woman for perjury and to have a warrant issued for her arrest. She was arrested on the 21st September, and on the 23rd September was sent for trial to the Assizes. After her arrest she made a statement admitting she had committed perjury, and that she had been forced to do so by her husband with the object of extorting money from Mr. Bolger. She was subsequently released on her own recognisances to take her trial at the Assizes. The reason assigned by the judge in discharging her at the Assizes was that he believed she had acted under the compulsion of her husband. It is right to add that the woman was in Waterford Prison awaiting trial for one month. With reference to the third paragraph, the Government has no funds at its disposal out of which to compensate Mr. Bolger for any losses he may have incurred. As regards the last paragraph, the Crown did not, as I have stated, refuse to prosecute the woman.

MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): Has the right hon. gentleman received the statement of the husband?

MR. ATKINSON: There was no evidence in the case against the husband. That was the conclusion to which the judge came. He said the statement of the woman would not be evidence against the husband.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Why was a *nolle prosequi* entered, instead of bringing the man to trial and enabling him to get his acquittal from a jury?

MR. ATKINSON: It was the proper course to take.

MR. T. M. HEALY: The man was put to all this expense. Who is the learned judge that gave that sacred opinion?

MR. DILLON: Has anything been done in respect of the magistrate who refused to hear evidence for the defence?

MR. ATKINSON: Nothing can be done.

CASE OF MICHAEL HOPKINS.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that in May last Michael Hopkins, at present confined in Maryborough Prison, completed $7\frac{1}{2}$ years' imprisonment, which, with the remission earned by his exceptionally good conduct since his committal, would count for 10 years out of the 24 to which he was sentenced; whether numerous petitions, signed by magistrates, clergymen, and representative men in County Longford, including the foreman of Longford Grand Jury, Colonel King-Harman, have been presented asking for mercy to him; and whether he can hold out any hope that the prayer of these petitions will be granted.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (MR. G. W. BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): The statements in the first and second paragraphs are substantially accurate. Memorials praying for a remission of sentence have been presented to the present Lord Lieutenant and his predecessor, and have been refused. The case has again been before the Lord Lieutenant upon a communication received a day or two ago from the hon. Member, but it has been decided that the law should take its course.

APLOTMENT OF CESS IN COUNTY CORK.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if the work of applotment of cess in County Cork was done by two clerks under the Grand Jury, and whether 40 clerks will now be required under the system prescribed by the Local Government Board; whether the County Council has sent a deputation to complain of the expense to the Local Government Board; and have similar complaints been made in other counties; and if it is alleged that the law requires so expensive a mode of book-keeping, why is it not amended.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: The Local Government Board understand that six persons were usually employed in the

applotment of county cess in County Cork, and about fifty in the preparation of poor-rate books of the county. The number of persons to be employed in the applotment of the consolidated rates will be somewhat short of the number heretofore employed, and in the course of a year or so, when the new system is thoroughly understood, the expense of making the consolidated rate will be very considerably lessened, and will show a material saving as compared with the old system. A deputation from County Cork attended on the Board, but their object was to obtain the Board's consent to certain variations in the Accounts Order to meet the peculiar requirements of this large county. These modifications were made by the Board. Complaints have been generally made to the Board as to the extra work involved by having to raise the charges mentioned in Section 57 (2) as a separate item in the rate books. The Board has gone as far as possible in the direction of minimising this labour by consolidating the public health charges within each rural district.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Will the right hon. Gentleman make a statement on this matter when the Vote for the Local Government Board comes on?

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: Certainly.

LORD DILLON'S ESTATE.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if the Congested Districts Board were in possession of the figures of gross and net rental of Lord Dillon's estate when they made the purchase; if not, on what basis was the price arrived at, and can the figures be now given.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: As already stated, the Congested Districts Board were in possession of figures as to the gross and net rental of the holdings on this estate when they approved of its purchase. The gross rental is about £20,500, but I do not feel at liberty to state the net rental without consulting the Board.

MR. T. M. HEALY: That is the whole point of the question. The right hon. Gentleman has had a week's notice of it.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: The Board has not met for a week. Personally, I see no objection to stating the net rental. But I must first consult the Board.

MR. T. M. HEALY: How can the taxpayers know whether they are getting value for money?

No answer was given.

WORK OF THE LAND JUDGE'S COURT.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that great dissatisfaction prevails in many portions of Ireland owing to the way in which properties under the jurisdiction of the Land Judge's Court are managed; whether numerous complaints and applications have been made to explain delay in the selling and transferring of the property to the tenants; whether the creditors have in many cases, as stated by Judge Ross, been ruined and left desolate by delays in realisation and payment of incumbrances; and whether some means cannot be devised by which a more expeditious and satisfactory transfer of property can be made to tenants purchasing from the court.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: I have referred this question to the Land Judge, who does not consider that the generalities contained in the first and second paragraphs require any comment from him. As regards the remainder of the question, I understand that on several occasions the learned judge has felt compelled to comment strongly on the delays of solicitors in the transaction of business, and that he has intimated that such delays, in future, will be visited upon the delinquent in the shape of a disallowance of portion of his costs.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—CONDUCT IN LIMERICK.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state the number of the rank and file of the Royal Irish Constabulary who have been fined for breaches of discipline while serving in County Limerick by the Inspector General, and the number of those fined by the County Inspector, respectively, from the 1st June, 1896, to the 31st May, 1899, and from the 1st June, 1893, to the 31st May, 1896; the number of men disgraced; the number of men punished by unfavourable records; and the number of courts of inquiry held for same periods respectively.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: There are reasons in the interests of the public service for not answering this question, and I will ask the hon and learned Member not to press it.

REPORT OF THE INSPECTORS OF IRISH FISHERIES.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): On behalf of the hon. Member for the St. Patrick Division of Dublin, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can explain why the Report of the Inspectors of Irish Fisheries has not been presented, in accordance with the provisions of the 112th Section of 5 and 6 Vic. c. 106, which directs that they should, on or before the last day of January in each year, make a Report to the Lord Lieutenant, and submit a copy to both Houses of Parliament if then sitting, or within three weeks after the commencement of the next session; whether he can state when the Reports for 1898 will be presented; and whether he will take such steps as may be necessary to enforce a compliance with the Act in future.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: The Report of the Inspectors of Irish Fisheries for 1898 will be presented to Parliament in a day or two. The reasons which prevent a compliance with the statutory requirement in regard to the period within which the annual Report of the Inspectors should be presented were explained by me in answer to a question put by the hon. and learned Member for North Louth on the 21st of February, 1898.

LAY TITHE RENT-CHARGE IN IRELAND.

MR. HEMPHILL (Tyrone, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what is the aggregate annual amount of the lay tithe rent-charge now payable in Ireland; and whether the persons liable to pay such tithe rent-charge are almost altogether of the landlord class.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: Lay tithe rent-charge is not payable to the Irish Land Commission, and they have no statistics either as to its amount or the persons liable to pay it.

NEWBLISS EVICTIONS.

MR. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the

Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the doctor engaged by the agent of the Rossmore Estate to certify to the fitness of removal of the woman Finegan, on the occasion of the recent eviction proceedings near Newbliss, has an established practice in any town or district in the County Monaghan; did Dr. Henry make any report upon the case to the Local Government Board; and upon whose authority did the police depart from their custom to make known to the coroner all deaths occurring under circumstances leading to the belief they were accelerated by eviction proceedings; and what is the name of the doctor who gave to Lord Rossmore's agent the certificate that the dying woman was fit to be removed.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: I understand that the doctor who accompanied the agent on the occasion referred to informed the agent that the woman was fit to be removed. I am not aware that he gave a formal certificate to this effect, and in any case I cannot conceive that any medical man would state, or certify, that a woman whom he believed to be dying was fit for removal. The doctor alluded to was employed, presumably, by the agent; his services were not requisitioned by the police, nor is he subject in any way to the control of the Executive Government. This being so, and as the inquiry in the last paragraph appears intended not so much to elicit information as to injure the individual in question, I do not feel bound to answer it. Dr. Henry, the Dispensary medical officer, made no report upon the case to the Local Government Board, nor was it his duty to do so. The police had no reason to think that the woman's death was accelerated by the visit of the agent, and they did not, therefore, report the case to the coroner.

MR. MACALEESE: Has this doctor any practice in Monaghan?

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: I really know nothing about him.

MR. MACALEESE: Was he not an imported doctor, brought in for the purpose of giving this certificate?

No answer was given.

THE IRISH LANGUAGE IN IRISH SCHOOLS.

MR. FLAVIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of

Ireland whether he is aware that a public meeting in connection with the Oireachtas was held in the Mansion House, Dublin, on the 8th instant, at which resolutions were unanimously passed calling on the National Board of Education in Ireland, in the interests of education and common justice, to give permission for the use of bilingual reading and copying books in schools at the option of the manager in Irish speaking districts; and also that in all schools Irish may be taught as an extra subject within the ordinary school hours in the fourth, fifth, and sixth classes; whether, owing to the great revival of the Irish language, representations will be made to the National Board of Education to make such changes in their regulations as will admit of the national utilisation of the Irish language in the primary educational system of Ireland; and whether the Government will consider the proposals made in these resolutions.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: Copies of the resolutions referred to have been received by the Commissioners of National Education. It is already provided by the Board's rule that if there are Irish speaking pupils in a school the teacher, if acquainted with the Irish language, may, whenever practicable, employ the vernacular as an aid to the elucidation and acquisition of the English language. The proposal to sanction the use of bilingual reading books and bilingual copy books in such schools, viz., where the pupils have already a knowledge of Irish, does not receive the approval of the Commissioners, nor do they consider it desirable that in all National schools Irish should be taught to the four senior classes within ordinary school hours. As regards the second and third paragraphs, the right to make such changes in the programme of instruction as may be considered necessary rests with the Commissioners themselves.

MR. FLAVIN: Has the Board any objection to Irish being taught between the hours in which other languages are taught?

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: I think my answer was quite full enough.

MR. FLAVIN: I will put another question on this.

QUEEN'S COLLEGE, GALWAY.

MR. PINKERTON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, in the case of the Royal University, Intermediate Board, and Board of Education, one-half the governing body and one-half the executive are Roman Catholics, and is there any statutory provision to that effect; has the attention of the Government been called to the constitution of Queen's College, Galway, in which the president, all the office bearers, and six out of seven of the governing body of that college are Protestants; is he aware that Sir Robert Peel pledged the Crown to the appointment of Roman Catholics whenever possible in that college; and does the Government propose to make any change in the constitution of the college.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: The Senate of the Royal University consists at present of thirty-five members (exclusive of the Chancellor), of whom nineteen are Protestants and sixteen Roman Catholics. There is one vacancy on the Senate. The Board of Intermediate Education consists of seven members, of whom four are Protestants and three Roman Catholics. In the case of neither of these bodies is their religious composition determined by statute or charter. Of the Commissioners of National Education ten must under their charter be Roman Catholics and ten Protestants. The fact is as stated in the second paragraph. I have already replied to a question similar to that contained in the third paragraph to the effect that I was unable to find any such pledge. The Government have no present intention of making any change in the constitution of the college.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: As one of the professors has no pupil at all, will the right hon. Gentleman make no change in that case?

No answer was given.

BUNDORAN WATERWORKS.

MR. MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the proceedings of two large meetings of ratepayers held in the Court House at Ballyshannon on the 13th and 15th June respectively, and presided

over by the Chairman of the Town Commissioners and the Chairman of the District Council: whether he has received copies of resolutions unanimously passed at those meetings, protesting against an Order of the Local Government Board, dated 15th May, 1899, enlarging the contributory area for Bundoran Waterworks, and making the Bundoran water rate a district charge, instead of a charge on the area originally responsible for the loan raised to pay for the works; whether he is aware that one rate, in repayment of an instalment and interest on the loan, has been levied off the area originally defined, whose valuation is £2,933 1s.; and whether, having regard to the fact that the inhabitants of the electoral divisions of Ballintra, Ballyshannon Rural, Ballyshannon Urban, Carrowgarden, Carrickboy, and Cliff, comprised in the enlarged area, are opposed to the charge and will get no benefit from the Bundoran Waterworks, he will take steps to have the sealed Order rescinded and the charge confined to the district from which it was originally arranged that it should be levied.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: The answer to the first and second paragraphs is in the affirmative. I have already explained that the Order of the Board is based on the general principle which it was deemed necessary to adopt in consequence of the rating provisions of the Local Government Act of last session, and has been assented to by the majority of the boards of guardians of Ireland. I am very reluctant to depart from that principle with respect to particular instances, unless an overwhelming case of serious hardship can be shown. As at present advised, I am not convinced that such hardship can be shown to exist in the present instance, but I will look further into the matter.

KERRY COUNTY COUNCIL AND THE FOOD AND DRUGS BILL.

MR. FLAVIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a resolution in connection with the Food and Drugs Bills unanimously adopted by the Kerry County Council on the 27th April, 1899, stating that great injury has been done, and fraud committed, by the artificial

colouring of margarine with butter; also, that the importation of foreign milk should not be allowed to continue without some restrictions; and whether effect will be given to this resolution in the Food and Drugs Bill now before Parliament.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: I have received the resolution referred to, and communicated it to my right hon. friend the President of the Board of Agriculture, the Minister in charge of the Bill, who no doubt will give the resolution due consideration.

AUGHNACLOY DISPENSARY DISTRICT.

MR. MACALEESE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Aughnacloy, where Dr. Phillips resides, is twelve miles from portions of the dispensary district of which that gentleman has charge; can any cases be cited in England where the poor needing medical relief have to travel twelve miles in order to obtain it; and if the Local Government Board cannot see their way to adopt the proposal made by the Rev. Father Callan, P.P., to have the five divisions of Truagh erected into a district, with a resident medical officer, will they devise some other scheme to mitigate the hardships now endured by the poor of the locality.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: I am making inquiry into the statement contained in the first paragraph, and must ask the hon. Member to postpone the question until to-morrow.

THE NEW CHANCERY JUDGESHIP.

MR. COGHILL (Stoke-upon-Trent): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the fact of the Judges of the High Court having vacations of four months in each year (at Christmas three weeks, at Easter ten days, at Whitsuntide ten days, and in the autumn two months and twelve days), he will introduce legislation to shorten those vacations by a month, before he asks this House to sanction the appointment of a new Judge.

MR. COHEN (Islington, E.): I beg at the same time to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when the additional Chancery Judge, whom Her Majesty's Government have announced their intention

to appoint, will be appointed ; and whether legislation is necessary before the appointment can be made ; and, if so, when he expects the necessary measure will be introduced in this House.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.) : The answer to my hon. friend is that the Government propose to proceed by Resolution, which, I think, is the proper way of dealing with the matter. I do not think I can make any further statement just now. In reply to the hon. Member for Stoke, I may say that legislation would be required to deal with the question of the shortening the Long Vacation, and that certainly could not be done this session.

MR. COHEN : When will the Resolution be introduced ?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR : I cannot say at present.

THE INDIAN BUDGET.

SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN : I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can state when the Indian Budget will be taken.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR : The financial statement has only just been received from India, so that it will be impossible to take it before the usual time—namely, about the end of the session.

THE FOOD AND DRUGS BILL.

MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton) : I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he can state when the Report stage of the Food and Drugs Bill will be taken.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR : I am afraid I cannot give a definite reply to this question.

MR. LAMBERT : Will the right hon. Gentleman give us due notice before he takes the Bill ?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR : I think I can ; but it is not always very convenient at this period of the session.

TITHE RENT-CHARGE (RATES) BILL.

INTRODUCTION.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. W. H. LONG, Liverpool, West Derby) : If the results of a variety of inquiries extending over a

considerable period of time, and if a virtual unanimity of opinion arrived at by distinguished and eminent men of our own time, who have given this subject their careful attention, constitute a claim for the redress of grievances, I think I shall have no difficulty in establishing a very good case for the subject to which I now invite the attention of the House. In 1843 the Poor Law Commission were asked to inquire into the incidence of local taxation—a subject which, like the poor, appears to be always with us, and always the subject of dissatisfaction and inquiry. In their Report there occurs this important passage :

“ We recognise the grievances to which the tithe-owner and some other classes of rate-payers are subjected in being rated upon the full value of their property.”

They only qualified that by objecting to the particular form of relief asked for. At a later period, in 1852, Mr. Gladstone, than whom there was no higher authority on questions of rating and taxation, referred in his Budget speech to a proposal by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to give some relief to owners of clerical tithe in regard to income tax. He said :

“ The clergy have a real grievance at this moment. It is admitted by all authorities. Professor Jones, Mr. Cornewall Lewis, and every man who has examined the subject of local rating, will tell you that the clergy suffer cruelly by being rated for local taxation upon their gross income.”

Mr. (afterwards Sir) George Cornewall Lewis was one of those who signed the Report from which I have quoted. Coming down to our own times, the Royal Commission appointed by ourselves has issued an interim Report and two minority Reports. That interim Report is of the most remarkable character, and, together with the evidence, will repay careful examination. Of the fifteen Commissioners twelve signed the interim Report, including Sir John Hibbert (formerly a distinguished Member of this House, and a high authority on questions of rating and taxation), permanent officials of the Treasury, and the town clerks of two of our greatest municipalities. They say that, pending the final Report of the Commission, the case of the parochial incumbent who owns tithe rent-charge might properly be met by some special measure of relief. The minority Report of the right hon. Member for Clackmannan only doubted the expediency of immediate

treatment. The Member for East Donegal suggested the inclusion of the clergy in the agricultural rating, and the Member for Hoxton alone told the clergy that they ought to be thankful things were no worse. The other Commissioners practically agreed in the existence of a grievance, and that it was one which ought to be dealt with. In order to illustrate how extraordinary this injustice is, let me take three different kinds of clerical endowment, each amounting to £300 a year. First take an income resulting from money investments, in which case the net deduction is £4 10s. Not a penny of that is liable to rates, so that the net income is £295 10s. Next take the case of an income arising out of glebe. The owner gets the benefit of the old Act, and of the Act of 1896. There the outgoings are £24 4s. 6d., and the net income is £275 15s. 6d. Now, take the case of the income of an incumbent derived solely from tithe at the present value of £300 a year. The outgoings came to £54, and the income falls to £246 5s., because this clergyman alone is called upon to pay rates on his income. Again, take a case in which we distinguish between a clerical and any other tithe owner or ratepayer. In the appendix to the Report of the Local Taxation Commission they take the mean of all these cases and work it out, giving an income of £223 14s. 5d. The percentage of rates paid by the owner of tithe rent-charge is on the average no less than 20·21 of his net income. If you apply the same calculation to an ordinary person, the owner or occupier of an ordinary hereditament, with the same income, you will find that the rates he would pay upon his assessment, which would probably be about one-tenth of his income, fall to 1·2, or, if the rates are at 6s., to 2·4. I venture to say that here is a disparity between these cases which justifies the demand that these people are making upon us—a demand which it is our intention to meet by this measure, of which I hope the House will approve. The decision of the Government to deal with the subject is not a recent one, but it was impossible for us to deal with it until we had before us full materials for consideration, including the interim Report of the Commission, which has been recently furnished. I may say that the measure with which we propose to ask the House to deal is simple, and the House will be glad

Mr. W. H. Long.

to hear also that it is brief in its character. We propose that the owners of tithe rent-charge shall in future pay one-half only of the rates to which they are at present liable. The question arises, and it is one in which the House will no doubt take the keenest interest, how is the deficit thereby created to be made up. The first suggestion that would occur to anybody is that the Imperial Exchequer should be the sole source from which to recover the deficit. When we had to deal with agricultural rating it was inevitable that the Imperial Exchequer should make up the deficit. The deficit was so great that it could not be allowed to fall upon the other ratepayers, and, unfortunately, there was no other way by which it could be made up. It was our poverty but not our will that consented, and we had to fall back on the Exchequer. Turning to the local taxation account, we find that there is, compared with the time when it came into existence in 1889-90, an increase of no less than £756,419 under the head alone of Licences and Probate Duty Grant. Comparing this year with last the increase is £143,197. The amount required for the relief to be given by this Bill will be only £87,000. Therefore there is not only sufficient to meet this deficit and a considerable balance to go on with in the ordinary way, but the change in the incidence from a limited class of ratepayers to the whole community is one that will give relief to the particular class concerned without casting upon any other class a burden which anyone can honestly call appreciable. I have precedents for this course. The Public Health Act of 1875 gave the same exemptions to the tithe-owner, and the Baths and Wash-houses Act gave an even larger exemption. Therefore there is a precedent for placing the tithe-owner in a better position than the other ratepayers in regard to the amount of their rates. The machinery of the Bill is simple enough. The collector of rates will forward his demand to the Board of Inland Revenue, who will pay the amount demanded, after deducting that amount from the gross sum of the local taxation account, before transferring that gross sum to the Local Government Board for distribution among the various local authorities. The relief that will be given by the Bill will remove a long-standing injustice in such a way that the burden will

not be felt by any of those upon whom it will fall. [Cries of "Why not?"] The reason is that under the existing system, unfortunately, the local authorities who have the spending of the money know beforehand of the fact that increased balances are coming into their hands. That rather tends to extravagance and bad administration. [Opposition cheers.] I can understand that cheer, but I am talking only of increases, and I say that if it were known that these growing amounts were coming at a fixed period, then the position of the local authorities would be much better. Unfortunately, they do not possess that knowledge, and they can only deal with the money when they receive it. These balances are available, and will cover the amount we require for the purposes of this Act; and I venture to say that if we are ever going to deal with this question of local taxation, and remove some of the burdens which press hardly upon certain classes of the ratepayers, it can only be done by some such system as is embodied in this Bill. I ask leave to introduce this measure, which will give substantial relief to a class that has long suffered from gross injustice, by a method which will not impose upon the ratepayers a single fraction of burden of which they need complain—of which, indeed, they would not even know if it were not for the speeches of hon. Gentlemen opposite.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the law with respect to the payment of rates on tithe rent-charge attached to a benefice."—(Mr. Long.)

*SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I feel bound, in the first place, to devote a small portion of the limited time at my disposal to expressing my surprise and entering my earnest protest against the procedure adopted in this matter. This method of introducing Bills at this period of the evening with a limited discussion was designed and adopted, as is shown by reference to *Hansard*, to facilitate the introduction of what are known as Departmental or non-controversial Bills. In the last Parliament I remember how loud and long were the remonstrances addressed by hon. Gentlemen opposite against the intention again and again of the Government of the day

to bring in Bills in this manner, on the ground that from their importance or their contentious nature they were not fitted for such treatment. At all events, now it is surely time we had some definite understanding and rule in the matter. Private Members' Bills can be introduced without any discussion at all, and that is sometimes used as an argument in favour of this method; but the Government have limited discussion for their Bills, and the present arrangement leaves it entirely at the discretion of the Government of the day to say which of the modes will suit them best, irrespective of the desires and interests of the rest of the House. However important and however contentious a Bill may be, as this is, they may introduce it in this manner provided only it be short; and, on the other hand, if it is advantageous for them to have a full explanation and discussion, then they can adopt that course. All I ask is that we should have some rule which is fair and equal all round. I commend that, not only to the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House, but also to the House itself, as a matter on which at least there ought to be some regular and fixed rule laid down. What is the nature of this Bill? It is a Bill to relieve certain clergy from rates. Last year the Chancellor of the Exchequer dealt with this question. I wish he had dealt with it on this occasion also, but the Minister for Agriculture has been brought in—we know not why. We have, however, the Chancellor of the Exchequer's opinion which he expressed last year. He said:

"It is all very well to say that you ought not to tax clergymen in this way more than the lawyer or the doctor; but, as a matter of fact, they have been taxed in this way for centuries past."

In fact, in a previous sentence he appears to have said they had been taxed since the days of Queen Elizabeth, and although that particular reference seems to have singularly disappeared from *Hansard*, it is authenticated by the fact that in the subsequent Debate references were made to it. The right hon. Gentleman corrects his speech and strikes out something which is not absolutely to his mind on second thoughts; but unfortunately he cannot strike out the references to it in the subsequent Debate. I do not insist, however, upon Queen Elizabeth, because "centuries past" answers my

purpose as well. The right hon. Gentleman goes on to say :

"That being so, to ask the Government to relieve property from taxation which has been so long subject to it, either at the expense of other ratepayers or at the expense of taxpayers generally, is not a practical request."

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS BEACH, Bristol, N.): That quotation does not accurately convey the meaning of what I said. I was alluding to the demands of some clergy that they should be entirely exempted from rating. That is what I was answering.

*SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN : We shall have opportunities of elucidating that point at a subsequent stage ; but those words—and very explicit words they are—are not invalidated by the fact that towards the close of his speech the right hon. Gentleman referred to this Royal Commission that was sitting, and said he waited—in fact, he rather invited—the Royal Commission to give him, and give the Government, some guidance upon the subject. We have been told on the highest possible authority—the authority of one who is not only Prime Minister, but Foreign Secretary—that, in his opinion, Royal Commissions are for the most part of small account. They are, at all events, very convenient to certain Governments. They may either be a means of enshrouding and postponing some subject which it is awkward to deal with, or, as we have seen, they may furnish a means of suggesting desired legislation for which it is difficult otherwise to find an excuse. This is a manœuvre with which we are becoming familiar. It is the easiest thing in the world. You desire to reward or conciliate some section of the community by endowing them with exceptional advantages at the cost of other people. A Royal Commission is sitting on the general subject applicable to the whole community. You get the Commission to issue an interim Report in favour of some particular advantage being given to a section of the community, and then you come forward with that particular demand. It is an ingenious device, but it loses its force when it is repeated so often as to become perfectly transparent. What is the case before us, apart from technicalities with which we have to-day no time to deal ? There are certain clergymen of the Church of England whose income comes from tithe

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.

or glebe land, and they find so heavy are the burdens of local taxation that their income, already poor, is reduced so as to be altogether inadequate. And this grievance has been greatly aggravated by the legislation of the present Government, who, a few years ago, gave relief to the landlord through his tenant.—[Ministerial cries of "No"]—well, say the tenant without the landlord if you like—gave relief to a favoured class by relieving them from half their rates, and necessarily imposed the other half on all the other ratepayers, including these very clergymen who now make complaint. I have the greatest sympathy with these unfortunate clergymen. I believe in many cases they are hardly in a position properly to discharge the duties of their high and important office. They ought to be relieved, but who is to relieve them ? They are to be relieved, according to the right hon. Gentleman, at the expense of the ratepayers out of moneys which, if they did not go to this purpose, would go to some other useful purpose beneficial to the community. The landlords have already been helped ["No, no"], now it is to be the clergymen. When is the turn of the householder and the shopkeeper and the tradesman and the community at large to come ? What is this, in the name of common-sense, this £87,000, but a fresh endowment of the Church of England. I am not aware that at the present moment there is such an overweening and universal confidence in the clergy of the Church of England that a proposal of this kind is particularly opportune. But passing from that, if the incomes of these clergy are insufficient, as I believe in many cases they are, for the proper discharge of their duties, and the maintenance of their position ; they are the servants of a Church, the richest far and away of all in the country—a Church which has amongst its members almost all the influential classes in society—the classes of exalted and wealthy position—and they are to come to the ratepayer of the country to make good this little deficiency in the incomes of the clergy. There is not a free and independent Church in the Kingdom so mean and so poor that it would not scorn to do it. I will not quote the case of what you call Nonconformist bodies, who have a different theory and a different ideal from yours in these matters. I will take the case of an Established Church well known to the

Leader of the House. The Church of Scotland is a poor Church; it does not include among its members the most exalted and wealthy of the community. It is a Church formed from the great mass of the trading, farming, and labouring classes in Scotland, at least it has its share, with the other Presbyterian Churches, of those classes. That Church, a few years ago, discovered—it did not dawn upon it, but it came home to it—that a large number of its ministers were not in receipt of a sufficient salary to maintain their position. What did it do? It instituted a fund, collected subscriptions, and fixed a certain minimum income which every one of its ministers was to receive, and that has been done by the freewill effort and self-sacrifice of the people of the Church of Scotland. Here is an instance of an Established Church which takes the right way in dealing with a difficulty of this sort. That is the way, and not to exact aid from the already burdened community, many members of which are every whit as much

in need of our generosity as the clergy of the Church of England. The case will be argued afterwards on its technical merits, but these are the general considerations which prompt me to declare an open and determined hostility to the object of the Bill. I began by saying I protested against a Bill of this importance being introduced by the Government in this manner with a full knowledge of the strong feeling which existed upon it, and in order to emphasise this opinion I beg to ask you, Sir, if you would, in the exercise of the power given you, put the question to the House that the Debate be now adjourned.

*MR. SPEAKER: The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition desiring to take the opinion of the House on the question of the Adjournment, I will put that question.

Question put, "That the Debate be now Adjourned."

The House divided: Ayes, 162; Noes, 243. (Division List No. 203.)

AYES.

Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, W. (Newc. under Lyme)
Ambrose, Robert
Arrol, Sir William
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Austin, M.
Barlow, John Emmott
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Augustine
Blake, Edward
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carmichael, Sir T. D. Gibson-
Carvill, Patrick G. Hamilton
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Clark, Dr. G. B. (Caithness-sh.)
Clough, Walter Owen
Commins, Andrew
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Courtney, Rt. Hon. Leonard H.
Crisly, Daniel
Crombie, John William
Curran, Thomas (Sligo, S.)
Daly, James
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan)
Davitt, Michael
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duckworth, James

Edwards, Owen Morgan
Ellis, John Edward
Evans, S. T. (Glamorgan)
Evans, Sir F. H. (Southampton)
Evershed, Sydney
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Farrell, Jas. P. (Cavan, W.)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir W. (Derby Co.)
Fowler, Right Hon Sir Henry
Fox, Dr. Joseph Francis
Gibney, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gordon, Sir Wm. Brampton
Hammond, John (Carlow)
Hayden, John Patrick
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale-
Hazell, Walter
Healy, Thomas J. (Wexford)
Healy, Timothy M. (N. Louth)
Hedderwick, Thomas C. H.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Chas. H.
Holland, W. H. (York, W.R.)
Horniman, Frederick John
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson-Ferguson, Jabez E.
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, David Brynmor (Swan.)
Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)
Jordan, Jeremiah
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Kinloch, Sir John George S.
Kitson, Sir James

Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Langley, Batty
Lawson, Sir W. (Cumb'land)
Leese, Sir J. F. (Accrington)
Leng, Sir John
Leuty, Thomas Richmond
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Logan, John William
Lough, Thomas
Lyell, Sir Leonard
Macaleese, Daniel
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
M'Ewan, William
M'Ghee, Richard
M'Hugh E. (Armagh, S.)
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, James
M'Leod, John
Maddison, Fred.
Mappin, Sir Frederick Thorpe
Mellor, Rt. Hon. J. W. (Yorks)
Mendl, Sigismund Ferdinand
Molloy, Bernard Charles
Montagu, Sir S. (Whitech'pl)
Moore, Arthur (Londonderry)
Morley, Charles (Breconshire)
Morris, Samuel
Morton, E. J. C. (Devenport)
Moulton, John Fletcher
Murnaghan, George
Norton, Captain C. William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkeny)
O'Connor, J. (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
Oldroyd, Mark
Palmer, Sir C. M. (Durham)

Palmer, G. Wm. (Reading)
 Pease, Alfred E. (Cleveland)
 Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)
 Perks, Robert William
 Pickersgill, Edward Hare
 Pilkington, Sir G. A. (L., S.W.)
 Pinkerton, John
 Pirie, Duncan V.
 Power, Patrick Joseph
 Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
 Richardson, J. (Durham, S.E.)
 Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
 Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
 Scott, Chas. Prestwich (Leigh)
 Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
 Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)

Smith, Samuel (Flint)
 Souttar, Robinson
 Spicer, Albert
 Stanhope, Hon. Philip J.
 Steadman, William Charles
 Stevenson, Francis S.
 Strachey, Edward
 Stuart, James (Shoreditch)
 Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
 Sullivan, T. D. (Donegal, W.)
 Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
 Thomas, Alf. (Glamorgan, E.)
 Thomas, David Alf. (Merthyr)
 Tuite, James
 Ure, Alexander
 Wallace, Robert

Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
 Warner, Thos. Courtenay T.
 Wedderburn, Sir William
 Whiteley, George (Stockport)
 Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
 Williams, John C. (Notts.)
 Wills, Sir William Henry
 Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
 Wilson, John (Falkirk)
 Wilson, John (Govan)
 Woodall, William
 Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Hudd'rs)
 Woods, Samuel
TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
 Mr. Herbert Gladstone and
 Mr. Causton.

NOES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
 Aird, John
 Allhusen, Augustus H. Eden
 Allsopp, Hon. George
 Anson, Sir William Reynell
 Archdale, Edward Mervyn
 Arnold, Alfred
 Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
 Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis
 Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
 Bagot, Capt. Joceline FitzRoy
 Bailey, James (Walworth)
 Balcarres, Lord
 Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manc'h'r)
 Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W. (Leeds)
 Banbury, Frederick George
 Barnes, Frederic Gorell
 Barry, Rt. Hon. A. H. S. (Hunts.)
 Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
 Bartley, George C. T.
 Barton, Dunbar Plunket
 Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benj.
 Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H. (B'rst'l)
 Beach, W. W. Bramston (Hants)
 Beckett, Ernest William
 Bemrose, Sir Henry Howe
 Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
 Beresford, Lord Charles
 Bethell, Com nander
 Biddulph, Michael
 Bill, Charles
 Blakiston-Houston, John
 Blundell, Colonel Henry
 Bolitho, Thomas Bedford
 Bond, Edward
 Bonser, Henry Cosmo Orme
 Boulnois, Edmund
 Boufield, William Robert
 Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex)
 Brassey, Albert
 Brodric, Rt. Hon. St. John
 Brookfield, A. Montagu
 Brown, Alexander H.
 Brymer, William Ernest
 Bullard, Sir Harry
 Butcher, John George
 Campbell, Rt. Hon. J. A. (Glasgow)
 Carlile, William Walter
 Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
 Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh.)
 Cayzer, Sir Charles William
 Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, E.)
 Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
 Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
 Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.)

Chamberlain, J. A. (Worc'r)
 Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
 Chelsea, Viscount
 Clarke, Sir Edward (Plymouth)
 Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
 Coghill, Douglas Harry
 Cohen, Benjamin Louis
 Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
 Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
 Cotton-Jodrell, Col. E. T. D.
 Cox, Irwin Edw. B.
 Cranborne, Viscount
 Cripps, Charles Alfred
 Cruddas, William Donaldson
 Carzon, Viscount
 Dalrymple, Sir Charles
 Digby, John K. D. Wingfield
 Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
 Dixon-Hartland, Sir. F.
 Dorington, Sir John Edward
 Doughty, George
 Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
 Douglas-Pennant, Hon. E. S.
 Duxford, William Theodore
 Drage, Geoffrey
 Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
 Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart
 Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
 Elliot, Hn. A. Ralph Douglas
 Fardell, Sir T. George
 Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
 Fergusson, Rt. Hon. Sir J. (Man.)
 Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
 Firbank, Joseph Thomas
 Fisher, William Hayes
 FitzGerald, Sir Robt. Penrose
 FitzWygram, General Sir F.
 Flannery, Sir Fortescue
 Fletcher, Sir Henry
 Folkestone, Viscount
 Fry, Lewis
 Galloway, William Johnson
 Gibbons, J. Lloyd
 Gordon, Hon. John Edward
 Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
 Goschen, Rt. Hon. G. J. (St George's)
 Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
 Goulding, Edward Alfred
 Graham, Henry Robert
 Greene, W. Raymond (Cambs.)
 Greville, Hon. Ronald
 Gunter, Colonel
 Halsey, Thomas Frederick
 Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord Geo.
 Hamond, Sir C. (Newcastle)

Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robt. Wm.
 Hardy, Laurence
 Hare, Thomas Leigh
 Hatch, Ernest F. George
 Heath, James
 Heaton, John Henniker
 Hill, Rt. Hon. A. Staveley (Staffs)
 Hill, Sir Edw. Stock (Bristol)
 Hoare, Edw. B. (Hampstead)
 Hoare, Samuel (Norwich)
 Holthouse, Henry
 Holland, Hon. L. R. (Bow)
 Hornby, Sir William Henry
 Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn
 Jackson, Rt. Hon. Wm. Lawies
 Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
 Johnston, William (Belfast)
 Jolliffe, Hon. H. George
 Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir J. H.
 Kimber, Henry
 King, Sir Henry Seymour
 Knowles, Lees
 Laurie, Lieut.-General
 Lawrence, Sir E. Durning (Co n)
 Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
 Lecky, Rt. Hon. W. E. H.
 Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
 Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
 Llewellyn, E. H. (Somerset)
 Llewellyn, Sir Dillwyn (Swan)
 Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
 Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
 Long, Col. C. W. (Evesham)
 Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Liverpool)
 Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
 Lorne, Marquess of
 Lowe, Francis William
 Lowther, Rt. Hon. J. (Kent)
 Lloyd, Archie Kirkman
 Lucas-Shadwell, William
 Macartney, W. G. Ellison
 Macdonald, John Cumming
 Maclean, James Mackenzie
 McArthur, Charles (Liverpool)
 McCalmont, Col. J. (Antrim, E.)
 McIver, Sir Lewis (Edin'brgh, W)
 Maccolin, Ian
 Manners, Lord E. Wm. J.
 Maple, Sir J. Blundell
 Maxwell, Rt. Hon. Sir H. E.
 Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
 Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
 Milbank, Sir Powlett C. J.
 Mildmay, Francis Bingham
 Milner, Sir Frederick George

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.

Milton, Viscount
 Milward, Colonel Victor
 Monk, Charles James
 Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
 Moore, William (Antrim, N.)
 More, R. J. (Shropshire)
 Morgan, Hn. F. (Monmouthshire)
 Morrell, George Herbert
 Morton, A. H. A. (Devonport)
 Mount, William George
 Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G. (Bute)
 Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
 Newark, Viscount
 Nicholson, William Graham
 Nicol, Donald Ninian
 Northcote, Hn. Sir H. Stafford
 O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
 Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
 Pease, H. Pike (Darlington)
 Penn, John
 Percy, Earl
 Pierpoint, Robert
 Pilkington, R. (Lancs., Newton)
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Pretymian, Ernest George
 Priestley, Sir W. O. (Edin.)

Purvis, Robert
 Rankin, Sir James
 Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
 Richardson, Sir T. (Hartlepool)
 Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir Matthew W.
 Ritchie, R. Hn. Chas. Thomson
 Robertson, H. (Hackney)
 Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
 Rou d James
 Russell, Gen. F. S. (Cheltenham)
 Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
 Rutherford, John
 Samuel, H. S. (Limehouse)
 Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
 Savory, Sir Joseph
 Seoble, Sir Andrew Richard
 Seton-Karr, Henry
 Sharpe, William Edward T.
 Shidebottom, Wm. (Derbyshire)
 Simeon, Sir Barrington
 Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
 Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
 Stanley, Hon. A. (Ormskirk)
 Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
 Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
 Stock, James Henry
 Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley

Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
 Thorne, Walter
 Thornton, Percy M.
 Tollemache, Henry James
 Tomlinson, W. Edw. Murray
 Tritton, Charles Ernest
 Ustome, Thomas
 Valentia, Viscount
 Wanklyn, James Leslie
 Warr, Augustus Frederick
 Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
 Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-
 Whitmore, Charles Algernon
 Williams, J. Powell- (Birm.)
 Willox, Sir John Archibald
 Wilson-Todd, W. H. (Yorks.)
 Wodehouse, Rt. Hon. E. R. (Bth)
 Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
 Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
 Wyndham, George
 Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
 Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
 Young, Commander (Berks, E.)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES.—
 Sir William Walrond and
 Mr. Anstruther.

Original question put.
 List No. 204.)

The House divided: Ayes, 247; Noes, 169. (Division)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
 Aird, John
 Allhusen, Augustus Henry E.
 Allsopp, Hon. George
 Anson, Sir William Reynell
 Archdale, Edward Mervyn
 Arnold, Alfred
 Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
 Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis
 Atkinson, Right Hon. John
 Bagot, Capt. J. FitzRoy
 Bailey, James (Walsworth)
 Balcarres, Lord
 Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manc)
 Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W. (Leeds)
 Banbury, Frederick George
 Barnes, Frederic Gorell
 Barry, Rt. Hon. A. H. S. (Hunts)
 Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
 Bartley, George C. T.
 Barton, Dunbar Plunket
 Bathurst, Hn. Allen Benjamin
 Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H. (Hants)
 Beach, W. W. Brimston (Hants)
 Beckett, Ernest William
 Bemrose, Sir Henry Howe
 Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
 Beresford Lord Charles
 Bethell, Commander
 Biddulph, Michael
 Bill, Charles
 Blakiston-Houston, John
 Blundell, Colonel Henry
 Bolitho, Thomas Bedford
 Bond, Edward
 Bonnor, Henry Cosmo Orme
 Boulnois, Edmund
 Bousfield, William Robert
 Bowles, Captain H. F. (M'd'x)
 Brassey, Albert

Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
 Brookfield, A. Montagu
 Brown, Alexander H.
 Bryner, William Ernest
 Bullard, Sir Harry
 Butcher, John George
 Campbell, Rt. Hon. J. A. (Glasgow)
 Carlile, William Walter
 Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
 Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
 Cayzer, Sir Charles William
 Cecil, E. (Hertford, East)
 Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
 Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
 Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Bir.)
 Chamberlain, J. A. (Worcester)
 Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
 Chelsea, Viscount
 Clarke, Sir E. (Plymouth)
 Cochrane, Hon. T. H. A. E.
 Coghill, Douglas Harry
 Cohen, Benjamin Louis
 Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
 Colomb, Sir John C. Ready
 Cotton-Jodrell, Col. E. T. D.
 Cox, Irwin Edward B.
 Cranborne, Viscount
 Cripps, Charles Alfred
 Cruddas, William Donaldson
 Curzon, Viscount
 Dalrymple, Sir Charles
 Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
 Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
 Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
 Dorington, Sir John Edward
 Doughty, George
 Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
 Douglas-Pennant, Hon. E. S.
 Duxford, William Theodore
 Drage, Geoffrey

Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
 Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. Hart
 Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
 Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
 Fairclough, Sir T. George
 Fellowes, Hon. A. Edward
 Ferguson, Rt. Hon. Sir J. (Manc)
 Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
 Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
 Fitzbank, Joseph Thomas
 Fisher, William Hayes
 FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose-
 Fitz Wygram, General Sir F.
 Flannery, Sir Fortescue
 Fletcher, Sir Henry
 Folkestone, Viscount
 Fry, Lewis
 Galloway, Wm. Johnson
 Gibbons, J. Lloyd
 Gibbs, Hn. Vicary (St. Albans)
 Gordon, Hon. John Edward
 Gorst, Rt. Hon. G. J. Eldon
 Goschen, Rt. Hon. G. J.
 Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
 Goulding, Edward Alfred
 Graham, Henry Robert
 Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
 Greene, W. Raymond (Camps.)
 Greville, Hon. Ronald
 Gunter, Colonel
 Halsey, Thomas Frederick
 Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord G.
 Hamond, Sir C. (Newcastle)
 Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robt. Wm.
 Hardy, Laurence
 Hare, Thomas Leigh
 Hatch, Ernest Frederick G.
 Heath, James
 Heaton, John Henniker
 Henderson, Alexander

Hill, Rt. Hn. A. S. (Staffs.)
 Hill, Sir Edward Stock (Bris.)
 Hoare, E. B (Hampstead)
 Hoare, Samuel (Norwich)
 Hobhouse, Henry
 Holland, Hon. L. R. (Bow)
 Hornby, Sir William Henry
 Houston, R. P.
 Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn
 Jackson, Rt. Hn. Wm. Lawies
 Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
 Johnstone, William (Belfast)
 Jolliffe, Hon. H. George
 Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir J. H.
 Kimber, Henry
 King, Sir Henry Seymour
 Knowles, Lees
 Laurie, Lieut.-General
 Lawrence, Sir E. Durning (Crn.)
 Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
 Lecky, Rt. Hn. William E. H.
 Lees, Sir Elliot (Birkenhead)
 Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
 Llewellyn, Evan H. (Somerset)
 Llewellyn, Sir Dillwyn (Swan.)
 Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
 Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
 Long, Col. C. W. (Evesham)
 Long, Rt. Hn. W. (Liverpl.)
 Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
 Lorne, Marquess of
 Lowe, Francis William
 Lowther, Rt. Hon. J. (Kent)
 Loyd, Archie Kirkman
 Lucas-Shadwell, William
 Macartney, W. G. Ellison
 Macdonald, John Cumming
 Maclean, James Mackenzie
 M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
 M'Calmont, Col. J. (Antrim, E.)
 M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinb., W.)
 Malcolm, Ian
 Manners, Lord Edward Wm. J.
 Maple, Sir John Blundell

Maxwell, Rt. Hn. Sir Herbert E.
 Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
 Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
 Milbank, Sir Powlett Chas. John
 Mildmay, Francis Bingham
 Milner, Sir Frederick George
 Milton, Viscount
 Milward, Colonel Victor
 Monk, Charles James
 Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
 Moore, William (Antrim, N.)
 More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
 Morgan, Hn. Fred. (Monm'thsh)
 Morrell, George Herbert
 Morton, A. H. A. (Deptford)
 Mount, William George
 Murray, Rt. Hn. A. G'r'h'm (Bute)
 Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
 Newark, Viscount
 Nicholson, William Graham
 Nicol, Donald Ninian
 Northcote, Hon. Sir H. Stafford
 O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
 Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
 Peace, Herbert Pike Darlington
 Penn, John
 Percy, Earl
 Pierpoint, Robert
 Pilkington, R. (Lancs. Newton)
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Pretymann, Ernest George
 Priestley, Sir W. O. (Edin.)
 Purvis, Robert
 Rankin, Sir James
 Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
 Richardson, Sir T. (Hartlepool)
 Ridley, Rt. Hn. Sir Matthew W.
 Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
 Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
 Round, James
 Russell, Gen. F. S. (Cheltenham)
 Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
 Rutherford, John

Samuel Harry S. (Limehouse)
 Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
 Savory, Sir Joseph
 Scoble, Sir Andrew Richard
 Seton-Karr, Henry
 Sharpe, William Edward T.
 Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
 Sidebottom, Wm. (Derbysh.)
 Simeon, Sir Barrington
 Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
 Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
 Stanley, Hon. A. (Ormskirk)
 Stanley, Lord (Lancs)
 Stirling-Maxwell, Sir J. M.
 Stock, James Henry
 Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
 Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
 Thorburn, Walter
 Thornton, Percy M.
 Tollemache, Henry James
 Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
 Tritton, Charles Ernest
 Usborne, Thomas
 Valentia, Viscount
 Wanklyn, James Leslie
 Warr, Augustus Frederick
 Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
 Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon
 Whitmore, Charles Algernon
 Williams, J. Powell (Birm.)
 Willox, Sir John Archibald
 Wilson-Tod, W. H. (Yorks.)
 Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
 Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
 Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
 Wyndham, George
 Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
 Yerburch, Robert Armstrong
 Young, Commander (Berks., E.)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
 Sir William Walrond and
 Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Allan, William (Gateshead)
 Allen, Wm. (Newc.-u.-Lyme)
 Ambrose, Robert
 Arnol, Sir William
 Ashton, Thomas Gair
 Atherley-Jones, L.
 Austin, M.
 Barlow, John Emmott
 Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
 Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
 Billson, Alfred
 Birrell, Augustine
 Blake, Edward
 Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
 Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
 Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
 Buxton, Sydney Charles
 Caldwell, James
 Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
 Carmichael, Sir T. D. Gibson
 Carvill, Pat. Geo. Hamilton
 Cawley, Frederick
 Channing, Francis Allston
 Clark, Dr. G. B. (Caithness-sh)
 Clough, Walter Owen
 Commins, Andrew
 Condon, Thomas Joseph

Crilly, Daniel
 Crombie, John William
 Curran, Thomas (Sligo, S.)
 Daly, James
 Dalziel, James Henry
 Davies, M. V. (Cardigan)
 Davitt, Michael
 Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles)
 Dillon, John
 Donelan, Captain A.
 Doogan, P. C.
 Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
 Duckworth, James
 Edwards, Owen Morgan
 Ellis, John Edward
 Evans, S. T. (Glamorgan)
 Evans, Sir F. H. (South'ton)
 Evershed, Sydney
 Farquharson, Dr. Robert
 Farrell, James P. (Cavan, W.)
 Fenwick, Charles
 Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
 Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmund
 Flynn, James Christopher
 Foster, Sir W. (Derby Co.)
 Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
 Fox, Dr. Joseph Francis

Gibney, James
 Goddard, Daniel Ford
 Gurdon, Sir Wm. Brampton
 Hammond, John (Carlton)
 Hayden, John Patrick
 Hayne, Rt. Hon. Ch. Seale-
 Hazell, Walter
 Healy, Thomas J. (Wexford)
 Healy, Timothy M. (N. Louth)
 Hedderwick, Thomas C. H.
 Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Chas. H.
 Holland, W. H. (York, W. R.)
 Horniman, Frederick John
 Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
 Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
 Jacoby, James Alfred
 Johnson-Ferguson, Jabez E.
 Joicey, Sir James
 Jones David Brynmor (Swansea)
 Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)
 Jordan, Jeremiah
 Kearley, Hudson E.
 Kilbride, Denis
 Kinloch, Sir John G. Smyth
 Kitson, Sir James
 Labouchere, Henry
 Lambert, George

Langley, Batty
 Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumb'land
 Leese, Sir J. F. (Accrington)
 Leng, Sir John
 Lewty, Thomas Richmond
 Lewis, John Herbert
 Lloyd-George, David
 Logan, John William
 Lough, Thomas
 Lyell, Sir Leonard
 MacAleese, Daniel
 MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
 M'Ewan, William
 M'Ghee, Richard
 M'Kenna, Reginald
 M'Killop, James
 M'Leod, John
 Maddison, Fred.
 Mappin, Sir Fredk. Thorpe
 Mellor, Rt. Hn. J. W. (Yorks)
 Mendl, Sigismund Ferdinand
 Molloy, Bernard Charles
 Montagu, Sir S. (Whitechapel
 Moore, Arthur (Londonderry)
 Morley, Charles (Breconshire)
 Morris, Samuel
 Morton, E. J. C. (Devonport)
 Moulton, John Fletcher
 Murnaghan, George
 Norton, Capt. Cecil Williams
 Nussey, Thomas Willans

O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
 O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
 O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
 O'Connor, Jas. (Wicklow, W.)
 O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
 Oldroyd, Mark
 Palmer, Sir C. M. (Durham)
 Palmer, Geo. Wm. (Reading)
 Pease, Alfred E. (Cleveland)
 Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)
 Perks, Robert William
 Phillips, John Wynford
 Pickersgill, Edward Hare
 Pilkington, Sir G. A. (Lancs SW)
 Pinkerton, John
 Pirie, Duncan V.
 Power, Patrick Joseph
 Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
 Richardson, J. (Durham, S. E.)
 Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
 Robson, William Snowdon
 Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
 Scott, Chas. Prestwich (Leigh)
 Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
 Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
 Sinclair, Capt. John (Forfarsh.)
 Smith, Samuel (Flint)
 Souttar, Robinson
 Spicer, Albert
 Stanhope, Hon. Philip J.
 Steadman, William Charles

Stevenson, Francis S.
 Strachey, Edward
 Stuart, James (Shoreditch)
 Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
 Sullivan, T. D. (Donegal, W.)
 Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
 Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
 Thomas, David A. (Merthyr)
 Tuite, James
 Ure, Alexander
 Wallace, Robert
 Walton, Joseph (Barnsley)
 Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
 Wedderburn, Sir William
 Whiteley, George (Stockport)
 Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
 Williams, John Carvell (Notta.)
 Wills, Sir William Henry
 Wilson, Charles Henry (Hull)
 Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
 Wilson, John (Falkirk)
 Wilson, John (Govan)
 Woodall, William
 Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Hudders.)
 Woods, Samuel
 Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
 Mr. Herbert Gladstone and
 Mr. Causton.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Long and Mr. Solicitor-General.

TITHE RENT-CHARGE (RATES) BILL.

"To amend the Law with respect to the Payment of Rates on Tithe Rent-charge attached to a Benefice," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 248.]

*SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I hope the Bill will not be put down for Tuesday with a view of taking it on that day.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I think so.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: We have the strongest objection to take it so soon. Remember that the country at large has very little knowledge even of the intention of the Government in regard to this measure.

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will put down a Question on this subject for to-morrow.

MR. PIRIE (Aberdeen, N.): When will the Bill be delivered to Members?

*SIR M. HICKS BEACH: To-morrow.

SUPPLY. [15TH ALLOTTED DAY.]

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES, 1899-1900.

CLASS III.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £39,895, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, for Criminal Prosecutions and other Law Charges in Ireland."

*MR. DAVITT (Mayo, S.): I expect, Sir, that hon. Members opposite who are good enough to show an interest in the discussion of the Irish Estimates will expect a strong case to be made out to justify the proposal to reduce this Vote by the sum of £10,000, but I hope I shall be able to convince them that my proposal, everything considered, is, on the whole, a moderate one. If I understand the position of hon. Gentlemen opposite on Irish questions of this kind it is this—they are most anxious that Ireland should have an administration of law and justice as clean, as efficient, and as economical as this country possesses. If that is their desire—as I believe it is—I hope to have their support in the division lobby by-and-by.

Now, Sir, if hon. Members have not the Estimates by them, I would ask them kindly to recollect one or two figures which I intend to bring before the Committee. On page 202 of the Civil Service Estimates we find, under Class 3, Estimates for law and justice for Great Britain and Ireland amounting to a total of £3,809,088. Of this sum no less than £2,100,000, in round figures, is required for Ireland with its four and a half millions of people. That is, the cost of law and justice out of the Imperial Exchequer for the entire population of England, Scotland, and Wales, say, 35,000,000 of people, will be £1,703,090 for the current financial year, while law and justice in Ireland, paid for out of votes by this Committee with one-eighth of that population, will cost £2,100,000. Now, Sir, I come to the particular Vote to which I intend to move a reduction. This Vote for law charges and criminal prosecutions for the whole year amounts to a sum of £69,895. It is an increase of £7,000 on the Vote of last year, and I shall expect the Attorney-General for Ireland to explain why it is that such an increase has taken place during a year of almost unexampled freedom from crime and disturbances in Ireland. Let me point out to English and Scotch Members that there is a decrease in the corresponding Vote for both England and Scotland this year, while the Irish Vote has gone up to the extent to which I have referred. But this is not the most striking feature of this Vote. The extraordinary fact is that a sum of £69,000 is required for this department of law and justice in a country of four and a half millions of people, while the cost of the same services in England, with its 30,000,000 of people, is but £128,000, adding law charges and miscellaneous legal expenses together, as given on page 202 of the Civil Service Estimates. Now, Sir, what is the explanation of this monstrous disproportion of expenditure? Why should justice, law charges, and police cost the general taxpayer at the rate of 8s. 7d. per head in Ireland, and only cost at the rate of 6d. per head in England? Surely hon. Members opposite will agree with me that some explanation is required from the representatives of the Irish Government with reference to this extraordinary disproportion of expenditure. I must also ask leave to emphasise this additional fact, that Ireland is at the

present time, and has been for the past few years, I am happy to say, the most crimeless country in the whole of Europe. I do not believe that there have been a dozen murders in Ireland for the past five years. In fact, the hangman usually employed in Ireland is at the present moment in the bankruptcy court. He is "stone broke" over the collapse of his business. There is a slump in the hanging business in Ireland, and I hope it will long continue. Scott (the hangman) will not get one penny, I am happy to say, of this £69,000. Other serious crime has also all but vanished, Judges have been repeating the same judicial story over and over again throughout the country. And yet in face of these facts we are asked to vote £7,000 more for law charges and criminal prosecutions in Ireland this year than were required last. My contention is that this extravagance in law charges in Ireland, as compared with Great Britain, is due to the vicious system of rule which obtains in the one country and not in the other. Public money is shovelled into the hands of those whose business it is to keep this system going, and then when we complain of unjust taxation in Ireland we are told that so much of Imperial taxation is expended in Ireland in return, and that the balance between what we pay and what we get is nearly even. We get some of our taxes back, it is true, in this way—in this wasteful, extravagant piling up of expenses in connection with every department of this Dublin Castle system of finding fame and fortunes for all those who get themselves employment under it. These law charges are a part of this system of political corruption which obtains in Ireland, and against which we are here as Nationalist representatives to protest. The system of hiring and buying into Dublin Castle the service of hungry lawyers and of others who are quite willing to qualify for the service against their own countrymen necessarily gives rise to abuse. Human nature would not be what it is if it was not so, for whether it is the case of a large secret service fund, or a plethoric public purse for purposes of law and justice, human cupidity will strive to get a share of the spoils by fair means or foul. Let me ask the attention of the Committee to two instances of this character. One is that of a poor widow, now in prison, and the other is the notorious Mulrany forgery case. The case of

the widow Brennan can be told in a few sentences, without in any way reflecting upon the judicial bench, as I would not be permitted by you, Mr. Chairman, to call into question the action of any judge in a matter of that kind. The case in point comes under the Vote we are now discussing. This woman was evicted from her holding. She committed some trespass upon the landlord's property, for which she was prosecuted. How was she treated by the legal machinery which is controlled by the Attorney-General in Ireland? She was not tried by a jury. She was not dealt with by summary jurisdiction. No. This wretched widow was cited to appear in Dublin, at the Court of Chancery, all the way from Mayo, to answer for the crime of trying to get the shelter of her former home for herself and her little children. Now, to cite a poor woman from Mayo to a superior court in Dublin means that this wretched creature is asked to face an expenditure of £50 or £60. She possibly does not possess 50s. in the whole world, and because of this system of administering law in Ireland this unfortunate woman has been lying in prison for contempt of court—a court to which she could not possibly go—almost for the last twelve months. Now, Sir, the next instance I will give is a more serious one, and it also comes under the Vote which we are now considering. At the beginning of last year the Crown Prosecutor for Mayo, Mr. Malachi Kelly, made an intemperate speech in a court of justice in the West of Ireland, in which he resorted to certain threats against my hon. friend sitting by me and Mr. William O'Brien. Attention was called to this harangue in this House, and, instead of this official being rebuked for his unprofessional conduct, his language was endorsed and applauded by the Chief Secretary here in the House of Commons. Well, Sir, to this conduct of Mr. Kelly's, and the approval given to it by the right hon. Gentleman, I trace the origin of the crime which I charge the administration of law and justice in Ireland with indirectly condoning and palliating. The facts of the case are as follows: On the 14th of April of last year one James Kelly, a member of the United Irish League, received a letter through the post which read as follows:

"Newport, 13th April, 1898.

"Two shillings for drink. Dear James Kelly,—As you are aware that Martin Kelly

has gone back to the bastard Stoney on Monday, go with some of the boys and visit him, and tell him if he works he will be sorry, and that he is working against our cause. It would be better to blacken your faces. Do it to-morrow night, and watch the police. Other houses will be visited on the same night, so let Tierneane not be behind.

"Yours truly,

"JOHN MCHALE, Chairman, U.I.L.

"Burn this for fear of danger. Don't bring any man but one you can trust.—J.M.H.

"Mr. James Kelly, P.O., Rosturk."

Now, Mr. Lowther, there could be only one purpose indicated by that communication, that was the carrying out of a moonlighting outrage, which might probably result in loss of life. The signature to the letter was that of the President of the West Mayo branch of the organisation to which Kelly belonged. The Mr. Stoney mentioned by the writer was a local landlord, as unpopular with his class as with the people on account of personal transactions to which I do not wish further to allude. The Martin Kelly also alluded to had incurred unpopularity for being in the employment of Stoney, and the moonlighting outrage proposed by the writer of the epistle was to take place at his house. Now a striking fact in this case was brought out in the subsequent investigations, namely, that on the night mentioned in the letter, Friday, April 14th, Sergeant Sullivan had arranged an ambush at Martin Kelly's house, and was there with other constables from 11 p.m. until the following morning, but no moonlighting party went there on that or any subsequent night. Now, what happened? The person to whom the letter was addressed was not criminally inclined, and the bait laid for him did not catch him. He showed the letter to friends, who brought it under the attention of Mr. John McHale, whose name was forged to the document. Mr. McHale suspected that a dastardly plot had been planned against him, and having good reasons for suspecting Sergeant Sullivan, he set about the task of finding samples of the sergeant's handwriting. These he secured, and these along with the forged letter were submitted to Mr. Thomas Henry Guerrin, a noted expert, who has been employed for years by the Home Office in London and in connection with public prosecutions in this country, who affirmed in the most positive manner that the forged documents and the letters were in the same handwriting. The next

step in this case brings the administration of the law in Ireland into this conspiracy of shielding detected guilt where the guilt is the work of an agent of the law. Mr. McHale made a demand for criminal information against Sergeant Sullivan at the hands of the local magistrates at Westport, and every effort that could be put forth to embarrass that action was made by the local police authorities. It is no exaggeration to say that the Bench was packed on this occasion by the presence of every landlord justice who would be likely to have a partisan feeling against the organisation to which Mr. McHale belonged. The expert in handwriting from the Home Office came to Westport and gave evidence. He described himself as Thomas Henry Guerrin, of 59, Holborn Viaduct, London, Member of the Royal Microscopical Society, and professional expert in handwriting; and, in answer to this question, "Have you the slightest doubt that the handwriting in this impeached letter is the same as the handwriting in the letter marked C.?" he swore this: "I have not the slightest doubt. I am absolutely positive as far as I can be." Those proceedings took place on the 1st of July of last year, and after all the facts had been gone into the justices gave their decision as follows. Mr. Lynch, in giving the decision of the Bench, was understood to say that they had heard the case very carefully and it had occupied a great deal of time. It was a matter of great importance, and considering that the expert's evidence—Mr. Guerrin's evidence—was wholly uncorroborated with regard to the handwriting, that he might make a mistake about it, the Bench took it upon themselves to refuse information. Mr. McHale was not, however, to be moved from his purpose to have the truth brought out, and he demanded from the Bench to be himself bound over to prosecute Sullivan for a criminal offence. On this demand, an attempt was made by the magistrates to impound the documents so as to throw obstacles in Mr. McHale's way. That attempt failed, and the next scene of the drama charges to at the Summer Assizes at Castlebar on the 14th of July following. Here the Attorney-General for Ireland made his appearance in the case, but in the character of a most unwilling prosecutor.

*THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, *Mr. Davitt*.

North): I never intervened until a true Bill had been found.

*MR. DAVITT: In fact, he was forced to intervene by the very pointed remarks of Mr. Justice Murphy, who said:

"It is somewhat inconvenient that the Attorney-General has not been consulted. From what you have stated, MacDermot, this crime which was alleged to have been committed is a very serious one indeed. Obviously it is serious, and pre-eminently so if committed by a member of the constabulary. If, as you contend, there was a clear *prima facie* case made out, how do I know that the Attorney-General, if the facts were laid before him, would not have exercised his discretion in the matter?"

I contend that those remarks had a good deal to do with the case being remitted to the Sligo Winter Assizes, where it was tried in December last. Before I deal with that jury and make the very serious charge I shall have to make against those who organised this farce of a trial, I will quote what Mr. Justice Gibson said in his charge to the grand jury about the then condition of Mayo. He said there were six cases from the county of Mayo. One of these was a charge brought against a girl in connection with the death of her child; there was also a case of concealment of birth, a case of larceny, a case of shooting of a rather grave character at first sight, but probably the result of intemperance and a family quarrel. The last case was one of an unusual character against a policeman named Sullivan. As he was given to understand true bills had already been found by the Mayo grand jury they would not be required to investigate it at all. This was the state of the county of Mayo with its 200,000 of population at the time this attempt of manufacturing crime was made. Now, as to the jury which was empanelled to try Sullivan. I want the Committee to remember these few facts: Both the prosecution—that is, the Attorney-General—and the defence combined to challenge every juror who was a Catholic. Recollect that Sligo County is overwhelmingly Catholic, nine-tenths of its population are of that faith, and not a single one of that creed would either the Attorney-General or Sullivan's counsel permit to try the case against the accused. This was not the only deliberate act by which justice was sought to be defeated by the administration of the law in Ireland in connection with this case. Previous to this farcical trial, one Con-

stable Curtin, a fellow officer of Sullivan's, who gave information to his superior about Sullivan's tampering with the patrol book over the ambush at Martin Kelly's house, was banished from Mullranny out into the Atlantic, in a wild island called Inniskea, in order to mark their disapproval of his conduct in showing a willingness to assist the course of justice. These officers did more. They harassed other witnesses pending the trial at Sligo, and left no expedient untried to intimidate those who were proceeding against Sullivan. The trial, under the circumstances described, was a screaming farce, and concluded in a manner in keeping with its character, as follows :

At the conclusion of counsel's speech the Court adjourned for luncheon, and immediately on resuming,

The Foreman said the jury had made up their minds, and they did not want to hear any further evidence.

Mr. Wright said that the jury were probably acting on the statements made in Mr. Bushe's speech, which had not yet been proved. The witnesses were liable to cross-examination.

Mr. Justice Gibson said that was a very proper remark made by Mr. Wright, and the jury should retire and say whether on the Crown case alone it was their opinion that the prisoner should be acquitted.

A Juror : It is.

Mr. Justice Gibson : Is that the general opinion of the jury ?

A Juror : Yes ; we were unanimous about it this morning.

Mr. Wright : The jury have heard very important evidence since this morning.

Mr. Justice Gibson : The jury must retire, and say what their verdict will be on the Crown case as it stands.

The jury then retired.

Mr. Justice Gibson said this was the first time he had heard of such a result of a case.

Mr. Bushe : The same thing occurred in a moonlighting case in Cork in which I was.

Mr. Justice Gibson : The jurors are absolutely masters of the situation, but, as Mr. Wright has stated, some effect may have been produced on their minds by the admirable speech of Mr. Bushe, in which certain facts were stated. Such a thing often happens in a civil case, but it may occur in a Crown case as well.

The jury again came into court, and the foreman stated that they had made up their minds to acquit.

The jury had practically made up their minds before they went into the box to refuse justice. No attempt was made on the part of Sullivan to prove that the letter was written by anybody else. But the case did not end there. It was carried to Dublin, where Sullivan was sued

for criminal libel, but after a three days' trial the jury disagreed. If, however, the law of Ireland had been like the law of Scotland, where the verdict of the majority of a jury holds good, justice would have been brought home to the man who unquestionably was the author of the forged letter which incited to the commission of a crime. In Dublin, with a jury fairly empanelled, 10 out of the 12 men were in favour of convicting Sullivan, which conclusively proved that the author of this crime was allowed to go free in Sligo through the manner in which the prosecution was conducted by those for whose action the Attorney-General is responsible. English opinion has declared the verdict of a jury which acquitted a policeman in another country to be partisan, and that justice in that country is said to be tainted in consequence of the decision with regard to a Boer policeman. The verdict of this Sligo jury cannot be considered any more conclusive than the one at Johannesburg. I say, deliberately, that those who acted for the Attorney-General had, from the beginning, resolved to shield this officer from justice, and protect him from the consequences of his criminal design. This planned outrage was a part of a virtual conspiracy on the part of policemen, magistrates, landlords, and Crown prosecutors in Mayo to involve the United League in the commission of crime, and as a protest against this conduct I move to reduce this Vote by £10,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £29,895, be granted for the said Service."—(Mr. Davitt.)

*MR. ATKINSON : Before referring to the odious, unsupported and scandalous charges which the hon. Member has made against public officials who have courageously and honestly discharged the important duties of their office, and have gained the affection and respect of the worthiest portion of the community with which they deal, I wish to say a word on the general topics referred to by the hon. Member, whose remarks are to a great degree, if not altogether, founded upon an absolute ignorance of the difference between the systems which prevail in England and Ireland with regard to the payment of the costs of prosecutions.

In England to a large extent the money is paid out of the rates; but in Ireland, inasmuch as the Crown takes up almost every prosecution, it comes out of the Imperial funds. Thus upon the face of the Estimates the sum from Imperial sources appear to be out of all proportion to the population. The Estimates in general, as far as legal matters are concerned, are less by £1,200 this year than last, and are £10,000 less than when I previously held my present office. The amount has apparently increased by the fact that the Treasury has made contributions to the High Sheriffs in Ireland almost identical with those which they have made in England. The contribution is made to enable the Sheriffs to discharge the duties of their office, inasmuch as the emoluments which they were entitled to receive have decreased so much in late years that it was found impossible to get anybody to serve. As to the imprisonment of Mrs. Brennan, I am no more responsible for that than for the conduct of the Police in the Transvaal. A certain estate was being administered in the Court of Chancery, and the Judge made an order to put the woman in prison for contempt of court. That is not a matter for this Vote. It is entirely outside criminal procedure. It is only a form by which the Civil Court can make its orders to be obeyed, and I have no power to have the woman either imprisoned or discharged; it is entirely a matter for the Court of Chancery. As to the case of Constable Sullivan, I understand the hon. Member to charge those in authority with conspiracy to instigate outrage.

*MR. DAVITT: Virtual conspiracy.

*MR. ATKINSON: It is an infamous charge. What are the facts of the case? I will answer for my part of the transaction. I have more than an official responsibility; I have a personal responsibility, because from the time the case was taken up by the Crown until the verdict was delivered in Sligo, I watched over and directed every step of the proceedings. I am responsible for everything that was done, and I am here to justify the methods which were adopted. The merits or demerits of the United Irish League are foreign to the question. I will not go further than to say that Sullivan had become obnoxious to the League in the discharge of his duty,

Mr. Atkinson.

because some of the objects of the League were criminal and its methods were criminal. According to the sworn evidence of the local chairman, rigorous boycotting was one of its methods. McHale, the local chairman, is certainly unfortunate, for a well-conducted man, in the number of times he has been in conflict with the police. According to his own admission, during the last ten years he has been convicted of drunkenness, assault, and poaching fifteen times, and he only questioned the accuracy of two of the convictions. McHale, with the assistance of Mr. William O'Brien, issued a summons before the magistrate with a view to having Sullivan returned for trial. The Executive are not responsible, nor am I responsible as having charge of the criminal procedure of the country, for the action of the magistrates. I am surprised that hon. Members opposite are so enamoured with expert evidence in this case, for if they will take their memories back for ten years they will find that their contention then was that no value was to be attributed to such evidence. The only evidence submitted to the magistrates by the prosecution was that of an expert in handwriting, and I think the Bench were acting within their rights in refusing to act upon such evidence. I wish very much that I could reconcile myself to believe that the evidence of an expert would be accepted as proof conclusive in a criminal trial. If it were so, I apprehend that there are many gentlemen at large all over Ireland at the present time who would be justly serving time in Her Majesty's prisons. Not only are handwriting experts liable to the weakness of all expert witnesses—namely, that they endeavour to sustain a foregone conclusion, but they always hold a number of theories of their own in reference to the formation of letters. There is this weakness in all evidence of this character, that if the writing of the individual whose handwriting is attempted to be forged has any peculiarities, they are certain to be copied by a forger if he has specimens to work on. At all events, it was quite within the right and competence of the magistrate to refuse to accept such evidence. The Government are not responsible, and know nothing whatever about the charges made against them, which I believe are utterly unfounded. Of course I am not impeaching this handwriting expert in any way,

but my contention is that the magistrates were entitled to think that this expert evidence was not a safe thing to act upon. At the next summer Assizes Mr. McHale applied for permission to send up a bill before the Grand Jury. That permission was given; the bill was sent up, and such witnesses as the prosecution thought necessary, including Constable Curtin who had not been examined before the magistrates, were examined, and a bill was found. Up to that time the proceedings were entirely in the hands of the private prosecutor, and they never in any way put themselves in communication with the police, and no application whatever was made to the representative of the Crown to take charge of the prosecution. On the 27th of July, after the bill had been found, an application was made to the Crown to take up the prosecution, and within five hours the Crown sent an answer stating that they would take up the prosecution. The solicitor who was acting for the private prosecutor immediately put himself in communication with the Crown Solicitor. He handed over a list of the names of his witnesses, all the documents he had, all the statements of evidence of the witnesses who had been examined, and who he thought should be examined, and he added that one of the witnesses, named Conway, had not been examined because he had made contradictory statements. As this was a grave charge made against a police officer in a very responsible position, it was thought to be most desirable that the case should be tried at the earliest possible moment, and it was also thought desirable that it should be tried in a county other than Mayo, where the persons interested in the proceedings of the United Irish League in Mayo would not be called upon to serve on the jury. Therefore it was decided that it would be better to send the case for trial to the Sligo Winter Assizes. But I took good care to keep that decision to myself with the result that the jury panel was formed before the Sheriff could possibly have known that this case was to be tried at Sligo. It is provided by the Irish statutes that the panel from which these jurors are taken must be made up in a particular way, and in this instance the panel was made up in the ordinary way for the ordinary Winter Assizes. It was drawn up by the Sheriff in absolute ignorance of the fact that Sullivan

would be brought forward and tried on this occasion. The hon. Member opposite permitted himself to say that the witnesses were harassed by the Crown. If that was so, how were they harassed? Every witness whose name was furnished to the Crown by the private prosecutor was brought to Sligo at the expense of the Crown, maintained there at the expense of the Crown, and were sent back to their homes at the expense of the Crown also, and if that be not harassing there is no other harassing which can be assigned. Not a single witness that the private prosecutor wished to have examined was kept back, and we adopted his own notion in dispensing with Conway's evidence because we were informed that he was an unreliable witness. But that was not all. Owing to the importance of this case I took the precaution of giving special directions to the Crown Solicitor as to how he was to secure a just and impartial jury, and I will read those directions to the House. I wrote to the Crown Solicitor in Ireland the following letter:

"As the action of the Crown in this case is likely to be misrepresented no matter what it may be, I wish particularly to call your attention to the fact that you should examine the panel most carefully, and consult with the local Crown solicitor in reference to it. I desire, moreover, that in this and all other cases in which local prejudice may be excited or jurors may be influenced by fear, you will do your utmost to secure that a fair and impartial jury shall be empanelled. In that endeavour you should act strictly on the lines laid down in the circular addressed to Crown solicitors dated the 12th of February, 1894, and signed by my predecessor in office, The Macdermot, a copy of which you no doubt have in your office."

Now, the rules for Crown solicitors provide:

"And when in any case he shall have sufficient reason to believe that any person coming to be sworn as a juror is open to challenge for affinity to the person on trial, partiality, bodily or mental infirmity rendering him unfit to serve as a juror or other sufficient ground on which a challenge for cause, if made, could be sustained, he shall direct such juror to stand by. He shall also, in the exercise of a due discretion, direct to stand by all such persons as he shall have reason to believe are likely to be hindered from giving an impartial verdict, by favour towards the accused, or fear of the consequences to their persons, property or trade, although same may not admit of legal proof; and (in the discharge of this duty) the Crown Solicitor will not interfere unless the circumstances of the case require it, and will then act with due care and caution, but also with promptness and decision, and, if time per-

mit, should consult the leading Crown counsel in the case. In all cases of peculiar local excitement in any particular town or district of the county, it will be prudent, if the panel permit, to set aside all persons returned from such locality."

Those were my instructions to the Crown Solicitor, and I believe they were accurately carried out. Let me say a word or two about this much decried system of jury packing. It is a fact that every party litigant can challenge a juror for partiality provided he is able to show by facts upon which a challenge for cause can be sustained. This is called a challenge for cause, but in addition all litigants other than the Crown have certain powers of peremptory challenge. The right of peremptory challenge is then found to be necessary for the administration of justice. Why should the Crown, the guardian of society, not have it, even in a modified form. As far back as the reign of William III. a statute was enacted enabling persons to be put aside.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): Is the number of challenges by the Crown limited?

*MR. ATKINSON: If we fail to get a complete jury we are obliged to recall those put aside. Hon. Members have frequently enlarged on the iniquity of what they call jury packing, but those acquainted with the administration of the criminal law in Ireland are not disposed to attach too much importance to their condemnation. I can bear testimony myself to an incident which occurred when I was responsible for the conduct of the Winter Assizes in Cork in a very bad time. Hon. Gentlemen appear to think that a Roman Catholic juror has more sanctity than any other.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): That remark is an insult.

*MR. ATKINSON: I mean no insult. What I mean is that I am not aware that there is any particular sanctity about a Roman Catholic juror, and I cannot believe that any juror was ever set aside in Ireland because of his religion. If he is set aside it is because he is prejudiced. The hon. Member for East Mayo can perfectly well understand that in the North of Ireland religion might be the means of prejudicing a jury.

MR. DILLON: Did you ever empanel a Catholic jury to try an Orangeman?

Mr. Atkinson.

*MR. ATKINSON: I have seen Roman Catholic jurors serve very well, and what is more, I have seen them acquit Protestants; but that is not my point. I was endeavouring to give an illustration of the value of the wholesale condemnation of alleged jury packing. I remember at the Cork Winter Assizes a juror in my hearing asked the Crown Solicitor to be good enough to challenge him. The Crown Solicitor consulted me, and I said I could not allow any bargaining of that kind, that the juror should come to the box in the ordinary way, and that then it would be judged whether he was impartial enough to serve. He told us his business would be ruined if he happened to be sworn on the jury in the moonlighting cases about to be tried, and, of course, I concluded it would be very unsatisfactory to have a man so terrified on the jury. Accordingly he was challenged by the Crown, and what was my astonishment to find from the papers next morning that an indignation meeting had been held to protest against the insult offered to Catholic jurors, and that my friend of the previous evening was either chairman or a very prominent speaker at it. That shows the value of the condemnation indulged in in connection with alleged jury packing. When the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose was Chief Secretary a very foul murder was committed. At the first trial 19 men were put aside and a notorious criminal escaped justice. Another man, his confederate, was convicted and executed, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose was calumniated by placards posted all over Dublin "Who murdered Twist? John Morley." If a Government responsible for the conduct of business and the administration of the law has been constrained to use this power, to challenge it is not to pack a jury but to unpack it. It is said indeed that a similar power is not exercised in England. Probably not. But when jurors are murdered in England as in Ireland, when they are maimed, terrified, and canvassed in England as they are in Ireland, then the English authorities will have to put that power into force. We are comparing two unlike things. Not a month passes that I do not receive report after report from Crown Solicitors in Ireland stating that it is absolutely impossible to obtain verdicts at Quarter Sessions, even in cases of ordinary assault, because every juror is canvassed by the person charged or

his friends. In this particular instance nine men were ordered to stand aside by the Crown and four by the accused. In the civil case five jurors were challenged by McHale, and he did that within his right because he thought they would not be impartial. It has always been necessary for a Crown Solicitor who conducts a case to have regard to the particular conditions then existing in the locality, and I am bound to say that I have never known their powers to be abused. So far for the formation of the jury. The next step was this. Notwithstanding that this was not a case of a very serious character, I sent the most experienced Crown Prosecutor in Ireland specially to conduct it. A gentleman, a scholar, a lawyer with considerable experience and a just and fair mind, I think every member of the Irish Bar will admit the worth and fairness of Mr. George Wright, a Q.C. of many years' standing, and leader of the Munster Circuit. He conducted the case, and I arranged with him that every witness was to be produced, and I will give one extract from the concluding passage of his speech, which embodied faithfully the instructions I gave him. He said :

"This is not a place for sympathy, but a court of justice, and the jury should deal out the same justice to the sergeant as they would to the humblest member of the community."

Does that deserve the shameful charge that this gentleman entered into a conspiracy to pack the jury and acquit the accused? I desire to direct attention as to how that charge was insinuated and afterwards abandoned at the civil trial. At the first trial the jury said they had made up their minds on the Crown case that there was no evidence for conviction. Mr. Wright very properly protested against the jury interfering at that stage of the case. They had, he said, heard a very powerful speech from the learned counsel for the defence, but they did not know what might come out in the examination or cross-examination of the witnesses who were to be put into the box. His Lordship said that the whole matter was extremely awkward, and sent the jury back to consider whether their conclusions were based solely on the Crown case, or whether they allowed themselves to be in any way influenced by the speech of Mr. Bushe. But the jury came back and said they had made up their minds on the Crown evidence.

They were entitled to do that without having the infamous charge of corruption levelled against them.

MR. DAVITT: My charge is against those who packed the jury.

*MR. ATKINSON: There were twelve men on the jury, and only nine were challenged, and all were unanimous. Assuming that the iniquity of being Protestants attached to them if you like, does the hon. Gentleman contend that because they are Protestants they were deliberately finding a false verdict?

MR. DAVITT: My point is that they were selected because of their politics.

*MR. ATKINSON: The hon. Gentleman gave no proof of that whatever, and it is a charge which should not be made unless it can be proved. I do not know what was the religion of the gentlemen who were ordered to stand aside. The only question was whether they were partial, and if they were they ought to be set aside, no matter to what religion they belonged. The hon. Member has chosen to make this infamous charge in this House, but I should like to read to the Committee what was said by the counsel for McHale at the civil trial. The hon. Member for East Mayo reiterates the accusation that the jury was packed by Mr. Malachi Kelly, and he even went so far as to accuse my learned friend Mr. Wright as a participator. He is privileged to make this charge, but let me call attention to what counsel for McHale said. Mr. O'Shaughnessy said:

"My learned friend devoted a large portion of his address to an unnecessary vindication of our common friend Mr. George Wright, who was prosecuting at the Winter Assizes in Sligo. No one in this Court or out of it would for one second believe that Mr. George Wright, in the conduct of any prosecution of any case, ever did anything unworthy of the profession of which he is so distinguished a member, and I would say unworthy of himself. No one for an instant would cast such an aspersion, and my friend The Macdermot never stated or suggested anything of the kind."

Then he proceeds to deal with the accusation against the Crown Solicitor, and he says:

"Why the Crown Solicitor's name should have been dragged into this case I cannot at all understand. I have to sit here every day, as the other counsel engaged in the case

have, and if it has been thought that we have in the slightest manner reflected upon that gentleman, I say openly, and without any reservation, that it is a very erroneous idea, and I take it upon myself, so far as I am concerned, to add that it was wholly unnecessary to defend him."

Counsel shrank from making these charges because there was no evidence to support them. I was not, of course, responsible for the conduct of the civil trial; but I was responsible for the criminal trial. I endeavoured to secure a fair trial. I believe I did secure a fair trial. The only other matter to which I wish to refer is that connected with Constable Curtin, whom it is alleged was banished lest he might give evidence against the sergeant.

MR. DAVITT: To increase McHale's difficulty.

*MR. ATKINSON: Now, what are the facts? It is not too much to expect that hon. Members before making these charges should take the trouble of informing themselves of what has appeared in the public Press. The facts are that Curtin was in communication with McHale and his friends early in April. On 6th July his superior officer, having discovered that police information which ought to have been kept secret was leaking out, held an inquiry and decided it would be wise to remove Curtin. He was in utter ignorance that Curtin had given any statement to McHale, or made any report whatever until three days after Curtin's removal was determined upon, and then, and then alone, did the police become aware that he made a statement. So far from removing him because he was giving evidence in favour of McHale, he was removed three days before it ever came to the knowledge of the police that he had made a statement. Curtin was brought back to the trial. He was examined and cross-examined, and from his evidence it was quite clear that he was an ally of McHale, and by no means a disinterested witness. Here is a statement which he sent to Mr. Kilbride's clerk, who conducted the case against the sergeant:

"There is another piece of evidence I want to give, but don't bring it out in direct examination. Keep it for re-examination, and it will do for a petty jury, because otherwise it might show that I was actuated by malice."

Mr. Atkinson.

That is the gentleman who communicated with McHale's solicitor. He gave him a statement, coached him for the trial, and laid down the most effective way in which a damaging statement could be brought out, as there is no more effective way than by putting up an apparently candid witness, having previously arranged with him that he is to damage his own side. That was the person whom the authorities were accused of keeping out of the way. That is all I have to say with reference to this case. I cannot go step by step through every piece of the evidence, because the House of Commons is probably the worst tribunal to set up as a court of appeal on questions of fact. I did my best to secure an impartial trial. The case was presented fairly, and if a wrong verdict was returned the fault is not mine.

MR. DILLON: There are two points in the speech of the Attorney-General to which I desire to immediately allude. He made a statement with regard to the very important evidence of Constable Curtin, which I should like to clear up, as the point is very important. He said that when Curtin had discovered the falsification of the entry in the patrol book he did not report it to his officer, but immediately reported it to the prosecutor. This is not the evidence. The evidence was that he did report it to his officer, and was after that ordered to be removed.

*MR. ATKINSON: He swore he discovered the entry on July 1st. He was ordered to leave on July 6th, but did not actually leave until July 9th, and he never made any communication about this matter to his superiors until the 9th.

MR. DILLON: That is a point that ought to be cleared up beyond all doubt. I want to point out to the Committee that he did report to his officer, and the alteration of the patrol book bore directly and most materially on the evidence tendered at the trial. Thereafter the officer treated him very roughly and said that he was exceeding his business and had no right or call to be looking after such matters at all. This point as to the alteration of the patrol book is extremely important, for the constable swore that on that particular night on

which, by means of a forged letter, the man James Kelly was invited down to the house of a certain man, the police patrol under the command of Sergeant Sullivan—the very man who was charged with writing the forged letter—went on that particular night to the house of the man to be attacked, and remained there till nearly two o'clock in the morning—two hours longer than the patrol was ever known to remain in the district before. When Sullivan came home from that night ambush, Constable Curtin swears in his evidence that he was in bed, wondering why Sullivan's patrol did not return at the usual hour. He and his comrades accordingly inspected the patrol book, and found to their astonishment that that particular patrol had remained in ambush for four hours. In the patrol book was this entry :

“ Ambush near Kelly's house from ten p.m. until one a.m. Found all right.”

But when whispers began to get abroad, and when inquiries were being made about the forged letter, Sullivan, the accused man, went to the patrol book and altered the entry. He changed the A.M. into P.M., and put an additional 1 before the original 1 a.m., so as to make it read 11 p.m., thus making out that his patrol had returned to the barracks two hours before they actually did. Everybody sees that that materially alters the case. I charge the Attorney-General and the Irish Administration with gross and scandalous conduct in respect to their dealings with Constable Curtin. Whatever their other prejudices may have been—and the prejudice in the case of a constable who has given evidence against comrades and superior officer is very great—it cannot be said that the Grand Jury of Mayo is a body prejudiced against the police. It is dead now, thank God, and peace be with it, as an administrative body, but no one can accuse them of want of sympathy with the police. Well, they declared that, in their judgment, there was a *prima facie* case against Sullivan of a serious crime. The Government ought to have placed themselves above the suspicion of intimidating, boycotting, or punishing any constable, because it is always most dangerous to a constable to give evidence against his comrades. Instead of that, they have persecuted this man Curtin. Of course he has been boycotted, and a black mark placed against him, and he was

banished to the island of Inniskeen, a kind of Devil's Island, where the unfortunate man is now. Of course, also, we now hear from the Attorney-General of the charge trumped up against him, that his evidence was given in order to punish his superior officer. That is a matter of opinion ; but I say that in every case of this kind where a policeman gives evidence against an officer he is open to such charges, and it lies with the Executive to do everything in their power to give him fair play, and not to attack him before he has had an opportunity of giving his evidence. Now, I want to say something about the packing of the jury. We have listened to the defence of the Attorney-General, which I can show was no defence at all ; for he did not deal directly with any of the arguments put forward by the hon. Member for South Mayo. In the course of his speech the Attorney-General treated the Committee to a prolonged lecture on the question of jury-packing in Ireland—a subject which has frequently engaged the attention of the House, and will continue to do so as long as the practice exists. The hon. and learned Gentleman, in a passage of great eloquence and force, endeavoured to overwhelm us with the enormities of the crimes of the Catholic and the virtues of the Protestant juries. But what about the Catholics who were not allowed to come on juries in the County of Sligo? Did the hon. and learned Gentleman hold that no man is impartial in the county of Sligo unless he is a member of the Protestant religion ?

*MR. ATKINSON : I never said that.

MR. DILLON : It is a very singular thing that if you go down to a district where 90 per cent. of the population are Catholics and Nationalists, you bring out a jury on which there is not one Catholic or one Nationalist, but the whole twelve are Unionists and Protestants. That is what we complain of, and this is the way we are met in this House when we bring forward substantial charges. It is really a mockery to meet the substantial charges which we make with such an answer as has been given by the Attorney-General. Even in the singular annals of the administration of justice in Ireland this case is without parallel. On many previous occasions we have had to come before this House with complaints of

packing juries in Ireland for the purpose of obtaining convictions. Under the Irish system the challenges on behalf of the prisoner are strictly limited, whereas the challenges of the Crown are unlimited, and therefore the Crown can pack the jury in agrarian cases or those which have a political complexion. But on the present occasion the jury was packed for the purpose of obtaining not the conviction but the acquittal of the prisoner. In the packing of the jury the counsel for the prosecution and the defence were in collusion, and they both challenged the same men. That is actually an unparalleled case, and, of course, an acquittal was obtained. The Attorney-General pronounced a eulogium of an extraordinary kind on Mr. George Wright, the gentleman who conducted the prosecution. I do not want to say anything against Mr. Wright's character, but I shall read an extract from the speech with which he opened for the prosecution, and shall leave it without fear to the judgment of impartial men as to whether it is the speech of a man desirous of obtaining a conviction. He said:

"In that district there was a league called the Irish League, and he need hardly tell them that the conduct of the man Martin Kelly was disapproved of by the Irish League. And it became necessary for the police to protect Kelly to a certain extent, and they patrolled the district at night. In the absence of the patrol Kelly was set upon and beaten. The ill-treatment of Kelly continued, and it was suggested that, under the circumstances, this extremely regular and active man, Sergeant Sullivan, allowed his zeal to outrun discretion, and he resorted to a trick or stratagem, and wrote a letter in a disguised hand to James Kelly."

That is the language addressed to the jury by the prosecutor concerning the man accused of a most abominable crime—an incitement by means of a forged letter to commit a gross outrage at night. This is exactly on all fours with the Wheeler case in County Clare, where the police paid and sent an agent to organise an attack upon a house. A violent fight took place, and many lives might have been lost, but by a strange judgment of fate the man who organised the affair was the only one shot. Well, this crime, which it was alleged Sergeant Sullivan had organised, might have led to the very same results; and yet the prosecuting counsel for the Crown described this man Sullivan, in his speech

for the prosecution, as a zealous and excellent officer who allowed his zeal to outrun his discretion, and to write this forged letter. That language does not convey the impression of a man who really desires to obtain a conviction. There is another point in the history of this case which was not alluded to in the speech of the hon. Member for South Mayo or by the Attorney-General. This case was instituted as a private prosecution, and first of all tried at the Petty Sessions at Westport, when the bench was unquestionably packed. My evidence of this is that Lord Sligo and his agent were two of the most active magistrates on the bench, and that it was a case in which it was almost indecent for Lord Sligo to sit on the bench at all. One of the evils of Irish administration is that the resident magistrate is a policeman himself, and it is a positive farce for such a man to try a case in which a policeman is involved. Therefore I say the bench was packed, and in spite of strong evidence, which I have not the slightest doubt would have secured a conviction, and which, at any rate, would have been accepted as evidence of a *prima facie* case in an English court, yet they did not commit Sullivan for trial. The next step was at the Spring Assizes at Castlebar. There the institutors of the private prosecution had to go before a most hostile tribunal, but in spite of that a true bill was found on the evidence which was refused by the magistrates at Westport. Now, up to this point the case had been conducted by The Macdermot, one of the greatest criminal lawyers in Ireland, and who was Attorney-General under the late Government. I am given to understand that it was the earnest wish of those who had conducted the prosecution up to this point that the Crown should continue to employ The Macdermot in the case. Why should the Crown refuse to give that satisfaction to the public and to those who had conducted the private prosecution so far? Some explanation is demanded from the Crown of the reason why the services of The Macdermot were not retained to the end. Is it to be said that they did not trust The Macdermot; and, if so, on what grounds? The Attorney-General speaks of Mr. Wright, who was substituted for The Macdermot, as a man of very high character and honour and so forth, but Mr. Wright had no special connection with the Sligo Winter Assizes. It may be

Mr. Dillon.

that he practised for many years on the circuit; but at all events, in the ordinary course this prosecution would not have fallen within his province. If the Crown had left the case in the hands of The Macdermot it would have been very difficult for us to criticise their conduct of the case, as we can now do so strongly. There is only one other aspect of the case on which I wish to make some observations. The Attorney-General triumphantly asked a question as to how the witnesses had been treated. The witnesses, he said, had been brought to Sligo, their expenses paid, and taken back to their homes, as if that was extraordinary evidence of the generosity of the Crown in this case. But I believe that in all these cases that is the universal practice, and therefore there was no particular generosity on the part of the Crown.

What I allege, and what I can prove, is this, that from the hour when the private prosecution was instituted every witness who gave evidence against Sullivan and in favour of Curtin was subjected to police persecution. They were summoned for trifling offences—offences which had never been taken notice of before. For instance, a man was charged with trespass for allowing his horse to drink at a spring—a thing which he had been doing unchallenged for the previous fifteen years. After the Westport trial, when Sullivan heard that the case was to be brought on again at Castlebar, he went round to the witnesses and said:

“Mark my words, I will maintain my authority, and you will hear of this again.”

The houses of witnesses were also searched by the police. One man came in in a state of intoxication to the house of a witness without a search warrant, shoved open the door, and pulled the bed about. I was reading the other day a series of documents which had been prepared as an indictment of the Boer Republic in the Transvaal. The pages of the Blue Book contained affidavits sworn to by coloured men and women, and one of the crimes alleged against the Boer police was that they went into houses without search warrants, and this is made a matter of diplomatic despatches and threats of war. The very identical thing is being done in Westport by the officers of the law. What was done there was indeed infinitely worse than in the Transvaal, because in Johannesburg

the defence of the police was that they were endeavouring to carry out the law in a place where there was great immorality. In the present case, this invasion of a man's house and pulling about the bed was done by the policeman for the purpose of terrorising the witnesses. When we speak of the witnesses being persecuted, it was not when they were in Sligo, or going to and fro from Sligo, but in their own homes. I have no doubt myself, from affidavits which I am quite willing to submit to the Attorney-General, that in some instances at least the police broke the law in terrorising the witnesses. All that we ask in connection with this matter, and which we have never yet been able to get in Ireland, is that we should have an equal administration of the law, and that when the Attorney-General is going to prosecute for an alleged crime he should display the same zeal, and no more, for his political opponents as for his friends. What I charge is that, having to bring the criminal law into operation against an officer of their own in Ireland, they worked from beginning to end to obtain an acquittal, and displayed nothing of that spirit they would have done in trying to obtain a conviction. In Ireland, when you are prosecuting a poor peasant or Nationalist, you display all the vigour and ferocity of bloodhounds on the track of blood. When you are prosecuting in this country, however, the whole spirit of the scene is changed. In the present instance we have a glaring case of one of the grossest abuses that could be alleged against an Executive Government.

*MR. HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.): As some reference was made by my right hon. and learned friend to something that occurred when I had the honour of being a law officer and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose Burghs filled the office of Chief Secretary, I wish to make one or two observations in reference to the present case. I am not going to follow my right hon. and learned friend in the discussion about the propriety of jury packing in Ireland. I have always considered that one of the causes which has led to so much social and political disturbance in Ireland is the want of confidence which the people feel in the administration of the criminal law,

and I say, without fear or hesitation, that one of the things which has led to that distrust is the system of jury packing that undoubtedly has so long existed in Ireland. It would be most unjust to attribute to my right hon. and learned friend the creation of that system. He followed in the wake of others. The system sprung up at the beginning of the present or the end of the last century, in the old high Tory days, when there was only justice for people of a particular religion and of a particular opinion. That system became inveterate and en-crusted in our law, and, although the common law of England and the common law of Ireland is the same, the manner in which juries were constituted became in practice altogether different. There are many impartial members of the English Bar in this House, present I believe now, who will bear me out when I say that, though the right exists in England on the part of the Crown of setting aside juries in criminal cases, that right is hardly ever exercised. In my long experience as a member of the Leinster Circuit I have been present at trials in which 70 jurors were set aside on the trial of the prisoner—I do not say because they were Catholics, but they happened to be Catholics. It may or may not be *post hoc propter hoc*—I know not how that is—but unquestionably it has led to the great distrust of the peasantry of Ireland in these criminal proceedings, and has created the idea that the Government and the law are against them. Now, I am very glad that this case has come before the House of Commons. I need not say that, knowing as I have done for many years, and respecting as I do most highly my right hon. and learned friend the Attorney-General for Ireland and the gentleman whose name has been mentioned—Mr. Wright—I am satisfied, as everyone who knows them must be, that they are incapable of anything in the least way unbecoming the great profession of which they are both ornaments. But unquestionably this particular case has about it circumstances calculated to inspire people, especially those living in Mayo, with the idea that because a person accused of this atrocious crime was a policeman the ægis of the law is thrown around him. Now, I am only going to summarise, for the benefit of the hon. Members who may not have heard the eloquent statement of the hon. Member

Mr. Hemphill.

for East Mayo, the facts as they have come to my knowledge; but I am not going to pronounce an opinion as to whether Sergeant Sullivan was guilty or not, because it would be unbecoming of me to do so, and it is altogether irrelevant to the matter we are discussing. But there was a letter written, and it has been imputed that this atrocious document was written by the sergeant. Now, the very first thing that rouses suspicion is that though, as my right hon. and learned friend very properly said, the practice in Ireland is, almost without exception, for the Crown to take up prosecutions, in this particular case it was left, in the first instance, to a private prosecutor to try and bring Sergeant Sullivan to justice. Accordingly a summons was issued before the magistrates. There is, however, one fact which has not been mentioned, and if I am wrong my right hon. and learned friend will set me right. The Macdermot actually went down to the Petty Sessions to represent the private prosecutor and proceeded against Sullivan. The importance of that is that from the first The Macdermot's mind was perfectly saturated with all the facts of the case, and he was better able than any other man at the Irish Bar to see that justice was done. Well, The Macdermot, with all his ability, with all his ingenuity, went down to that Court of Petty Sessions—a very unusual thing for a man in his position at the Bar to do—but his evidence and his arguments were thrown away upon the bench consisting of the resident and local magistrates. The unpaid magistrates had flocked in, among them the landlord on whose estate the original outrage was committed which led to the charge, and, contrary to what is the practice and ought to be the practice, the landlord's agent; because, as a rule, in Ireland—and I suppose the same exists in England—landlords and their agents are loth to sit on the same bench for the administration of justice at the Petty Sessions. Now the bench so constituted dismissed the charge, and the people were naturally suspicious, as all poverty-struck and persecuted races are. That is the tendency of human nature—there can be no question about it—and hence the fear of the Irish peasantry that they do not get full justice from those in authority over them. Well, that was the first ground of suspicion. But what is the next? A private prosecutor applies

to Mr. Justice Murphy to send up a bill of indictment to the grand jury. That application was necessary because, the Crown not having taken the case up, the Bill could not be sent up without an order of the Judge, and I apprehend that it was on that occasion that Mr. Justice Murphy made the observation to which reference has been made. What follows? Mr. Justice Murphy left the authorities no alternative, and then the Crown were driven to take up the case, which was remitted to the Winter Assizes at Sligo. Now, that is a very common proceeding, and I am not finding fault with it. But I think it was most unfortunate, when the Crown had taken up the case, that they did not instruct one of Her Majesty's Counsel, The Macdermot, who had filled the office of a law officer under the preceding Government, and whose character is as high as that of the right hon. and learned Gentleman himself. If The Macdermot had appeared in that case, and if the result had been an acquittal of Sullivan, the people, who are a sensible people, would have felt that justice had been done, and that Sullivan had not written the letters. But Mr. Wright was sent down, a very eminent man, about whom there is not a word to be said, and whose opening speech has been mentioned by the hon. Member for Mayo. And what was the result? That nine jurors are set aside by the Crown, and that five are challenged by Sullivan, who is really in a sense in the service of the Crown. All the waters of the Atlantic would not wash out of the minds of the people the belief that if he had not been a sergeant of the Royal Irish Constabulary, that most favoured force, he would not have been acquitted. I rejoice that the strong light of the House of Commons—an eminently just body—has been thrown upon this matter, and I am glad that the circumstances of the case have been brought prominently forward. It will teach people not to rush hastily at conclusions whenever they read in *The Times* newspaper or elsewhere of some frightful outrage that has been committed in the West of Ireland.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): Grand jury packing in Ireland apparently means something very different from grand jury packing in England. Here we have a case where 90 per cent. of the people in a district where the jury are empanelled

are Catholics and Nationalists, and 10 per cent. are Protestants, yet we find that all the jury in this particular case were anti-Nationalists and Protestants. The Attorney-General tells us that this was a matter of chance, and that he cannot imagine how it occurred. Chance never plays such tricks as that, and I put it to the right hon. Gentleman on the other side of the House whether he really believes, with 90 per cent. of the population on one side and 10 per cent. on the other, it would be within the limits of probability for the entire twelve men who composed the jury to have been Protestants. But that is not why I rose; I rose to ask the Attorney-General a question. The Attorney-General referred to the use made by the Crown of a letter written by the witness Curtin to a solicitor, which he said was essentially a private letter. I think that is a good illustration of the extraordinary way in which justice is administered in Ireland.

*MR. ATKINSON: In answer to the charge that witnesses in the case have been treated improperly by the police, I can only say that if that is so, it is very strange that no complaint has been made in the House. I am certainly unaware of any such charge having been made. I have been asked why I have not sent down a particular gentleman to conduct this prosecution. I should have failed in my duty had I done so, seeing that that gentleman had been retained by one of the parties, and must of necessity have been a partisan.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): I will first allude to one of the observations made in the speech of the Attorney-General. My hon. friend complains that some of the witnesses were harassed by the police before this case came on, and the Attorney-General said that he thought a sufficient answer to that statement was that the people who were harassed had their own remedy. What does he mean by "remedy"? To go before a bench of magistrates? To go before a court of law? In listening to this Debate I have been asking myself whether I was in the British House of Commons or the French Chamber of Deputies. The last time I had the honour of sitting in the French Chamber of Deputies I heard exactly the same kind of

speech made by the then Minister for War with reference to the Dreyfus case as that which has been made by the Attorney-General for Ireland with regard to the Sullivan case. There was, however, this difference, that whereas the French Minister for War spoke with characteristic exuberance, the splendid deportment of the Attorney-General never deserted him, while he stated his case as if he really believed in it himself. There is still an analogy between the two cases. In both cases there were forgery and sham trials. The Attorney-General speaks very favourably of the conduct of Mr. G. Wright in this matter. Mr. G. Wright may be an ornament to his profession, as every barrister always is, but take his language; listen to it while he is trying to prove against Sergeant Sullivan the forgery of the letter which might have led to murder on the one side and to the gallows on the other. Mr. G. Wright was a Crown official. He was the gentleman prosecuting the charge. He speaks of this crime as an excess of zeal, the outcome of a scheme to entrap the guilty. This is the man who is determined to bring home the guilt to the man in the dock. The Attorney-General's own comments here to-night upon the case were scandalous and shocking. He said he was responsible for every action of the prosecution. He was responsible for the witnesses called. One of those witnesses was Mr. Guerrin, and another was the policeman Curtin. How does the Attorney-General speak of his own witnesses? With reference to the expert, he says that we, on a previous occasion, did not have much faith in expert evidence of this kind, but he did not state what that previous occasion was, and I can quite understand the reason, because it was the case of the Pigott forgeries. But he mentioned Guerrin for the purpose of throwing dirt upon him, and he mentioned Curtin for the purposes of damaging and destroying his character. If these people had appeared on behalf of Sergeant Sullivan he could not have damaged them more. When the case was brought before the Bench of magistrates the right hon. Gentleman was shocked at his learned friend in any way questioning their impartiality; but does not everybody know what is going on in Mayo at the present time? On the one side you have the landlords standing in the way of a great

and necessary reform, and on the other there is a great and, I am glad to say, a growing popular organisation among the tenants. There is a great class conflict going on in the county of Mayo, and there always is, and always will be, class wars in Ireland under these circumstances; but I hope they will come to an end. They would come to an end if England allowed Ireland to settle its own affairs and did not adopt the policy of dividing and conquering, which had been the ruin of both the landlords and the tenants. In Mayo the tenants have their organisation, and the landlords have the Bench and the Crown. The landlords are not ashamed to go on to the bench in these class cases and administer what they are pleased to call justice. Now this case was a very serious case, a very serious case indeed, but the magistrates had no such idea as that. They thought it was such a trumpery case that they struck it out. This impartial Bench, packed with landlords, was guilty of the infamous practice of wielding the law as a weapon. If the Bench was an impartial Bench, the right hon. Gentleman was wrong in the course he took, but the Attorney-General came in at the eleventh hour. This high guardian of the reputation of the constabulary in Ireland never takes a step until he is forced. Why did he take action here? The Attorney-General has lived all his life practically in Ireland, and nobody knows Ireland better than he does. The right hon. Gentleman knows very well that one of the fundamental principles of the Government of Ireland is that every Irishman knows every other man's religion, and everybody knew the religion of every man who was on the jury at Sligo, and also his politics as well. I do not care what the religion may be, but religious creeds sometimes make class hatred. The objection to these jurymen was that they were Unionists and in favour of the landlords, and were not likely to give an impartial verdict. It is my strong impression that every single one of the nine men challenged by the Crown were Catholics and Nationalists, and yet the jury of twelve men who tried this case were all Protestants and Unionists. Does the right hon. Gentleman deceive anybody when he says he does not know the religion of these people? Ninety per cent. of the population of Sligo are Catholic, and yet by an ex-

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traordinary change, by a marvellous and mysterious proceeding, the very twelve men who had to try this case, in which the Crown is on its trial as well as its sergeant—because that is what it comes to after all—are Protestants and Unionists. It is all nonsense to say the right hon. Gentleman does not know. It was a deliberate packing of the jury and nothing else. Hon. Members opposite have often expressed their sorrow at the sympathy which Irishmen have for the enemies of England. The Irish would be unworthy of their tradition if they were not in sympathy with all people who are struggling for their national independence and rights. The case of Edgar in the Transvaal appears to me to be one of very great injustice, although I have not heard the Boer side of the matter. The reason Irishmen do not give their sympathy to this country in connection with the tyranny of the Boer police, and the alleged corruption of the Boer tribunals, is because they have in their own country, under English laws, the very evils which are alleged to be taking place in the Transvaal. Until you remove from your Statute Book and your administration such offences as are charged against this country, Ireland will continue to regard English complaints of injustice in other countries as pharisaical.

DR. COMMINS (Cork County, S.E.): The law is administered in Ireland in a manner that would never be tolerated in England. This man McHale had reason to believe that this letter, written by Sergeant Sullivan, was written for the purpose of entrapping him into an act of moonlighting, which might have led to consequences terrible to contemplate, and he issues a summons against Sullivan for writing this forgery. Now just consider what would take place in England under circumstances like that. Instead of all the landlords in the country rushing on to the Bench to hear the summons, it would be left to one, or at most two magistrates. They hear this charge, and McHale brings before them a *prima facie* case; he brings, as a witness, the best hand writing expert of the day, a man who is employed by the Home Office of this country, who gives it as his opinion that the writing of the forged letter and the writing of other letters was the writing of Sergeant Sullivan. If such a case had come before any Bench in

England there would have been a committal; but if there had been any doubt in the case, if it had occurred in England, the Court would have said, "There may be a doubt in this case, we have some doubt with regard to the expert evidence, and we will not commit on that alone, but you can go on with an indictment." They would take the depositions, and the case would be presented to the grand jury at the next Assizes. One would have thought that in Ireland this would have been the same; but in this case, though the grand jury found a true bill, when it came before the petty jury they were objected to and challenged by the Crown. I have never known of any English case where the counsel for the Crown has asked a jurymen to stand aside. There is nothing more likely to excite utter mistrust in the administration of justice than the practice which prevails in Ireland. It is notorious that the Crown Prosecutor suggests to counsel to order "So and so to stand aside." In the case which has been referred to, it was perfectly clear that the Crown Prosecutor opened the case with an acquittal speech. "Upon these facts he merely suggested that this man might have been induced by over-zeal to write this letter." When Crown Prosecutors want to convict they do not merely "suggest." There is the old rule that nobody is to be convicted on suspicion, however strong; much less can anybody be convicted on a "suggestion." When we see all these strange coincidences tending in the one direction of shielding a policeman who is being charged, and to shut the door of justice against a class against whom it is too frequently shut, I think there is a case made out that the Crown have hardly held the balance fairly.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Cavan, W.): I think the right hon. Gentleman the Attorney-General is particularly weak in his defence. Either he was badly briefed in the matter, or in his reply to the hon. Member for South Mayo he betrayed an amount of heat which must almost be called partisanship. The hon. Member proved by the figures that the law charges have increased in Ireland by something like £70,000.

*MR. ATKINSON: £7,000.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: That is the particular Vote under discussion, but I

think he was speaking of the whole question. I cannot, by the rules of the House, discuss the whole question, but I want to call attention to one particular case with which I am well acquainted, and which I have brought intimately to the notice of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary, and of the right hon. Gentleman the Attorney-General himself. It is the case of the unfortunate prisoner Hopkins, who, under circumstances of exceptional stress and excitement, was condemned to the extreme sentence of 24 years' penal servitude, and on whose behalf I have presented no less than four petitions for mercy. Probably this could be dealt with more fully under another head of this Vote, but I will ask the Committee to allow me to call attention to the extraordinary circumstances under which this claim for mercy has been refused.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. G. W. BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): Is it in order on this Vote to call attention to a case which appears to me to have nothing to do with it, but to be a question of the exercise of the prerogative of mercy of the Lord Lieutenant.

THE CHAIRMAN: If the hon Member is speaking with regard to a remission of sentence for a prisoner who is now undergoing sentence, I do not think that would arise on this Vote.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I was using it as an illustration of the methods by which justice, so called, is meted out to us Irishmen, and as an additional argument why we should contest and resist to the utmost of our power the voting of so large a sum as is sought here to be obtained for the purpose of so-called justice and law charges in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman has come down here prepared to defend the items of this Vote, and we are entitled to bring these unredressed grievances to the notice of the House of Commons. I am surprised that the right hon. Gentleman should have sought to shut out of the purview of this Committee a question not so much of party conflict as an appeal for the clemency of the Crown.

THE CHAIRMAN: I have already pointed out that the question cannot be

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raised under this Vote. I have been listening very attentively to the hon. Member, but I do not see how he connects with this Vote the case which he desires to raise.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I do not intend to press the matter further than to use it as an argument in justification of the position of absolute hostility which I assume towards this Vote. We have a system of maintaining law and justice in Ireland against which the heart and mind and soul of Irish people rebel. It is a system of mean and paltry espionage, in a great many cases on individual people, and occasionally on organisations started in their behalf; and the Mulrany case which has been cited, the circumstances of which throw so much discredit on the administration of so-called justice, is but one instance out of many which might be given to show why the Irish people so much detest the system of which the right hon. Gentleman is the defender. We have to provide in this Debate for the expenses of prosecutions. How are prosecutions got up in Ireland? Under what system is it sought to hold the scales of justice evenly between man and man? In each county of Ireland there is a person kept in the direct pay of Dublin Castle, whose business it is to get up evidence for prosecutions, and in many cases to plan outrages and pay for outrages throughout the land. There is a large sum of money voted on these Estimates for secret services. A sergeant of police is kept in each county for the distribution of this secret service money, whose duty it is to keep in his pay the informer and the spy. In the case before the Committee it is very curious that out of a panel of 70, 80, or 100 men, in the first 25 there should have been found 12 Protestants and Unionists. The explanation is probably found in the fact that the official is a leading light in the Protestant world in Sligo, and is a Unionist partisan in political matters. Also, I do not think the conduct of Mr. George Wright in this case was that of a man who wanted to convict, nor was he free from political bias. It is curious that in a county where 93 per cent. of the population are Catholic, the twelve who were allowed to be sworn were of one denomination, and were known to be opponents of the principles of the United Irish League and of the doctrines of Home Rule for Ireland and the land

for the people. I know I should not like to be tried for any crime, especially a political crime, by twelve of the Protestant or Unionist jurors of my own county of Longford. They would not be able to dissociate from their minds the fact that I had been concerned in political agitation in the county. The argument of the prisoner's counsel in this case under notice told with the jury—that the prisoner represented the party of law and order, and that if they convicted him they would be condemning themselves to future terrorism and future annoyance at the hands of the League. I had hoped to be allowed, in this assembly of Englishmen, before political opponents, to advocate the case of the unfortunate man to whom I desire mercy to be shown.

THE CHAIRMAN: I have already twice told the hon. Member that this case cannot be raised upon this Vote. This is not the right time or place to raise the question, and I hope he will not continue to discuss it.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I will not continue to discuss it now, except to say that when I discover the right Vote upon which to raise it the right hon. Gentleman will hear from me again. The whole machinery by which we are governed from Dublin Castle is radically wrong. It is a system which tends to the creation of crime rather than to its suppression. Holding this belief, I shall support the opposition to this Vote, and I only regret that we cannot in a stronger and more marked degree show our detestation of the practice which the right hon. Gentleman has so badly defended.

MR. FLYNN: I trust that, notwithstanding all the criticisms which have been made in the course of this Debate, that the right hon. Gentleman the Attorney-General will quite understand that we are making no personal attack upon himself, and that we are in no wise raising personal issues in bringing forward the matters which have been raised in connection with this Vote. We are simply attacking the system with which these things are associated, and after the right hon. Gentleman's somewhat weak defence of his position we are forced to come to the conclusion that for so able a man a more inadequate defence of the scandalous and gross mismanagement

of Irish affairs was never heard in this or any other Chamber. In the course of his speech the right hon. Gentleman has declared himself a bigoted advocate of one side in this dispute, and in my 13 years' experience of this House I have never heard such a weak reply to such a grave indictment. As the national representatives of Ireland, we should be wanting in our duty to allow questions of religion or sectarianism to interfere with our judgment in this matter.

Attention called to the fact that forty Members were not present. House counted, and forty Members being found present—

MR. FLYNN: I am speaking for the vast majority of my colleagues when I say that we object to the introduction of sectarianism or religion into discussions of this kind, but it has been forced upon us by the peculiarly vehement language which the right hon. Gentleman the Attorney-General, allowed himself to use. We are not claiming for Roman Catholic jurors any special kind of sanctity, but we do claim that they should be trusted on their oath just as much as members of any other religion. More than that we cannot claim; less than that we will not claim. Notwithstanding the ludicrous illustration given by the Attorney-General, it is a pollution of the very fountain of justice that in a country like Ireland, at the end of the nineteenth century, this atrocious and invidious system of jury packing should be persistently indulged in by law officer after law officer, all over the country. I shall be able to give the Committee ample and copious illustrations as to what went on at the Winter Assizes in Ireland last year, and in cases many of which were non-agrarian. I will concede to the Government that if the Mulrany case stood alone it might be possible to raise some ingenious plea that it was merely a coincidence, although in a county in which the population is 90 per cent. Catholic it is very strange that the twelve men in the box all happened to be Unionists and Protestants, and if a religious controversy is raised the blame should be cast on those who were responsible for putting those men into the box. The Attorney-General sought to minimise the significance of the

figures of this Vote. The Vote as it stands shows an increase of £7,235, and that in a year in which judges of assize and county court judges have been presented with white gloves, and when it is notorious that Ireland was never so free from crime. The Attorney-General says that the increase is to be accounted for by the fact that the Crown has been obliged to pay the expenses of Sheriffs, but allowing for that amount in full there is still an increase of £115. My hon. friend who moved the reduction gave some rather interesting figures with reference to the cost of law and justice in Ireland. I would like to give a few other figures bringing out the same point in a somewhat different manner. Compare the three countries. The administration of law and justice in England, after deducting the amount for prisons, police, reformatories, industrial schools, and lunatic asylums, is £518,000 for a population of 30,000,000. Deducting the analogous Votes, in Scotland the amount is £135,000; whereas in Ireland, with a population of a little over 4,500,000, the amount, after similar deductions, is £426,000. Therefore I think we are entitled to bring to the notice of the Committee these most extraordinary figures which illustrate the manner in which large sums are spent in Ireland upon the so-called administration of justice. What is the moral to be deduced from those figures? Considering our population, we have the costliest judicial system in the world. We have law officers paid extravagant sums, and all because, as a great Irish orator once said, you might corrupt and bribe the intellect of the Irish nation, and that you might as far as possible enlist the legal intellect of the country on your side. I trust anything we may say in this Debate will not be held to be personally applicable to either the Attorney-General or the Solicitor-General. The figures are very instructive. The salary of the English Attorney-General, who has an enormous amount of business—commercial and otherwise—is £7,000. The salary of the Scotch Lord Advocate is £5,000, and the Irish Attorney-General gets £5,000. I think the latter salary should be reduced to something more in keeping with the business to be done and the population of the country. It may be asked by some who have discovered a newly found admiration for the Irish judicial system why we object to all

this money going to Ireland. We object to it on the ground of economy and also because it goes into bad hands and to support a rotten and vicious system. Why should the Irish Attorney-General receive the salary of a puisne judge? Lawyers are very anxious to get positions as law officers of the Crown because the salaries are out of all proportion to the amount of work to be done, and the right hon. Gentleman when he levels a charge against independent private Members of this House ought to remember the enormous salary attached to his office, and that Members from Ireland do their work relying entirely on the favour and love of their own people. With reference to jury packing I have several times during the last three or four years called attention to it by way of question, one of the most unsatisfactory methods of raising a discussion in this House. The answers I have got have not always been marked by accuracy, and still less often by courtesy. I do not complain personally, but when hon. Members bring forward cases of this kind they ought to be treated with the courtesy due to every Member of this House, and should not be looked upon as if they were faking up grievances in order to attack the Administration, when their only desire is to purify and keep pure the administration of justice in their own country. The right hon. Gentleman made a most unhappy allusion to the circular which was issued by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose when he was Chief Secretary. On each occasion when I have asked a question about jury packing I have been referred, with woful reiteration and persistence, to this circular. But we object to that circular, and would object to it if it came from the late Mr. Gladstone himself. We object to it and its application because it is invidious and unfair, and a standing insult to the jurors who profess the religion of the vast majority of the Irish people. It would be far more decent, manlier, more logical and consistent, to abolish the jury system in Ireland altogether in every case connected with politics and religion than to try and foist upon an intelligent people the sorry pretence that you are holding the scales of justice even. The right hon. Gentleman referred to a most wretched murder case which occurred in Cork and was tried at the Winter Assizes. A more unhappy illustration could not

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have been selected by the right hon. Gentleman even in his most heated moments. I regret to say that that murder occurred in the constituency I represent, but the morning after it all the shops in the neighbourhood were shut, it was denounced from every altar in the district, and instead of there being sympathy with the murderer, it was quite the other way. Two men were put on trial, one of whom was acquitted, and I do not think the right hon. Gentleman was entitled to use the language he did with regard to him. But with regard to Twiss, who was found guilty and subsequently hanged, one would imagine that the circular would have played a very conspicuous part in the trial.

MR. ATKINSON: Nineteen men were set aside in the first case, and over 25 in the second.

MR. FLYNN: But that was a case of murder, whereas in a petty contemptible case in Waterford 32 persons were set aside in one case and 50 in another. The jury that tried Twiss contained six or seven Roman Catholics and Nationalists. What was the result? The man was found guilty and subsequently executed, and it is absurd to bring that case forward as an illustration of the incapacity of Roman Catholic jurors.

MR. ATKINSON: I have brought it forward as an instance where the Government of the day, because they used their right to challenge, were denounced as murderers.

MR. FLYNN: Not by us. Their action might have been condemned by a small section of the population politically opposed to the right. hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose. In Cork there was no such indignation on the part of the masses of the people. The right hon. Gentleman's case falls to the ground. At the last Winter Assizes there were trumpery cases in which 20 and 30 jurors were ordered to stand aside, and neither Catholics nor Nationalists left on. In the Crusheen wounding case I said in my question that 29 jurors were ordered to stand aside, and, in the manner in which front bench men always like to snub private Members, the right hon. Gentleman said that was inaccurate, and that there were

not 29 but 28. I find, however, that there were 29, so I was accurate after all. I have gone carefully over the list and I have personal knowledge of the jurors, and of the 12 men empanelled there was only one Roman Catholic left on. That may be called a mere coincidence, of course; it may have been a fortuitous occurrence of events such as occurs in the land of dreams, in the realm of spooks, and—in Dublin Castle. The following day a boy of about 16 was charged with putting up a threatening notice. It was not a very atrocious affair. The jury disagreed the first time, and when he was put on trial the second time 18 jurors were ordered to stand aside, every one of whom was a Roman Catholic; another mere coincidence. These 18 jurors could not be trusted to say whether the youth was guilty or not, and when the jury was finally empanelled it contained only two Roman Catholics; again a coincidence. Here is a case in which insult was added to injury. A postmaster was charged with having bribed some Poor Law guardians in order to secure some positions in the Kilrush Union for friends of his. That was a particular species of offence which was denounced by all and found no sympathy whatever, and I say it was nothing less than an insult to the respectable citizens of Cork to order them up day after day under a penalty, and then when they came forward to say publicly, "This is not an agrarian case, but I will not trust you to try it." One of the regrets I experience in being a Member of Parliament is that it deprives me of being on the jury list, because if I were I would stand up before any judge and claim my rights as a citizen, and I would protest against the constantly repeated insults that are offered to us when we are told that we are not to be trusted to give a verdict as between man and man. It is a scandalous, anomalous, and infamous system which should not be permitted in any civilised country. With regard to the Cork cases I cannot be wrong, because I was in Cork myself, and carefully followed the whole matter. In Waterford a man was put on his trial for the murder of an old woman for the sake of robbery. I am informed that twenty jurors were ordered to stand aside at the first trial and fifty-four at the second. If I am wrong my statements can be easily tested, but, assuming that I

am right, are we to be told that these fifty-four jurors sympathised with such an atrocious and abominable crime? If not, what is the meaning of asking them to stand aside? I must say that if I were a juror at the Cork Winter Assizes, I care not who the judge was, I would give him my opinion of the proceedings and take the consequences. I think I have shown that jury packing is carried on all over the country and at every assizes that the Government wish. And in face of a state of things like that does any sane man expect that a keen, intelligent population like the Irish can be expected to believe in the impartial administration of justice? Will they believe that the curious manner in which twelve men of a certain religious belief and political persuasion are selected to try men opposed to them in religion and politics is a mere coincidence? It is a maxim in English law that it is better that ninety-nine guilty persons should escape than that one innocent person should be punished. You reverse all that in Ireland. In anything connected with the land struggle your doctrine has practically been "Better ninety-nine innocent persons should be punished than one guilty person should escape." That is the belief of the peasantry, and it is being strengthened by what goes on at each Winter Assizes. The Irish people will remember the Mulrany case and Sergeant Sullivan. The land agitation is not so much a thing of the past. We are aware of what occurred in Clare, by a system of police spies and *agents provocateur*. In connection with the Transvaal crisis the Imperialistic organs denounce the vast sums of secret service money spent in that country, and the opinion is entertained that the recent arrests in Johannesburg were part of a system of *agents provocateur*. That may or may not be true; but the last Government which can use an argument of that kind is the Government that supports and encourages these things in Ireland which cost such a large sum of money.

MR. SWIFT MAC NEILL (Donegal, S.): I intend to discuss this question far removed from any feeling of bitterness, and I hope when I have sat down I shall not have said one word personally hurtful to the Attorney-General. The right hon. Gentleman made a very admirable statement characterised by great ability, but anyone reading that statement to-morrow,

Mr. Flynn.

together with the speeches which have been made by my hon. friends on this side, will come to the conclusion that the administration of justice in Ireland has sunk knee-deep in corruption and pollution. The Attorney-General spoke of the atrocious, scandalous, and horrible charges brought by my hon. friend against the Government. The charges are atrocious, scandalous, and horrible; but the worst part of it is they are true. All the machinery of the law has been used to clear the character of a policeman who is guilty of inciting to murder. Judicial proceedings in Ireland have become vile and abominable and a farce. That is a strong phrase, but it is not too strong. The Attorney-General is a practical man, largely engaged in affairs which present themselves to him at the moment. He has not perhaps had so much time and leisure as I have had to investigate transactions of this kind. In the archives of Dublin Castle at the present moment there are no fewer than forty briefs which were held by MacDonagh, the chief counsel for the defence of the political prisoners, for 25 years. These were given to the Attorney-General at the time, and they were noted by him in order that he might convict the prisoners. The Attorney-General in the course of his speech read a passage from a statement which was elicited from Curtin about the falsification of the entry in the police books. Now, how did the right hon. Gentleman get that statement? Since the Attorney-General made his speech I have gone through a verbatim account of Curtin's examination in Dublin, and there is not a single syllable there of the matter to which the Attorney-General referred. I then went to an account not so full, and there is not a single syllable in it as to the matter which seems to be injurious to Curtin's character.

MR. ATKINSON: I said it was in the civil action.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I have got you there, for I have a verbatim report of the civil action, and there is not a word about it in that report. This is only another instance of the infamy of the Irish administration. When the Crown took up the case against Sullivan, clearly for the purpose of whitewashing him, the Crown Solicitor, Malachi Kelly,

got all the documents in the case from the solicitor who had been conducting it on behalf of McHale. Amongst these documents was a private statement given by Curtin to the confidential clerk of Mr. Kilbride, and it was from that confidential statement the Attorney-General quoted. [The hon. Member having quoted from a full report of the proceedings to show that the statement quoted by the Attorney-General had never been brought forward during the trials, went on to say:] The Attorney-General probably only got a few extracts prepared by his subordinates for the purposes of this Debate. He probably did not know that we had got a full report of the proceedings here, and that we will make the matter hum before we have done with it. The right hon. Gentleman was almost about to shed tears over "our common friend" Mr. George Wright. I believe that Mr. Wright is quite competent to do a good day's work for a good day's fee. What I maintain is that Mr. Wright's informant, the Crown Solicitor, prepared the briefs in such a way that an acquittal was morally certain, and this altogether apart from the jury packing. One thing which appeared to greatly grieve the Chief Secretary was that in Mayo, where this man Sullivan had been endeavouring to coin offences against the leaders of the Irish Nationalists, Mr. W. O'Brien's United Ireland League had been a great success all over the country. When the Crown undertook to conduct the prosecution of Sullivan, they selected as the solicitor Malachi Kelly, who had been engaged in prosecuting William O'Brien's friends, and in Ireland the Crown Prosecutor is largely influenced in the manner of conducting the prosecution by what suits the Government.

MR. ATKINSON : I did not select Mr. Malachi Kelly ; he happens to be the Crown Solicitor for Mayo, and would naturally conduct the case.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL : At any rate Mr. Malachi Kelly was engaged to go down to Sligo to blow up his own ships with the approval of the Castle. The right hon. the Attorney-General poses as a purist, a something of a cross between Aristides and Moses, and yet he allows Mr. Malachi Kelly to conduct a prosecution in which all his personal interests were vitally opposed to getting a conviction.

Then there came on the astonishing change of counsel. The Macdermot, the head of the Irish Bar for 15 or 16 years, and an ex-Attorney-General, who had conducted the prosecution both at Westport and Castlebar, and therefore knew all about the case, was shunted. I ask the House to believe that The Macdermot was put out of the case because he was determined to do the work honestly, and to bring about a conviction if possible. I think in the whole history of Irish administration, the taking of the case out of the hands of the head of the Irish Bar, and giving it to a gentleman who knew nothing of the case, and who had been publicly instructed by the friends of the accused man—all this, I think, out-Castles even Dublin Castle. The speech of Mr. G. Wright was mild to the last degree for the Crown prosecutor. He must have got his instructions from Mr. Kelly, who was the personal enemy of Mr. McHale, and the personal friend of Sergeant Sullivan. The Macdermot was a Catholic, and perhaps that stood in the way of his appointment. Of Mr. G. Wright's Protestantism there is no doubt whatever. That gentleman was a favourite of the Government for a seat in this House, and he is a favourite with them for Crown prosecutions. I hope this case may stand as an instance of the villany of Irish administration. I have not gone outside by a tittle, in the statements that I have made in this case, of the speech of my hon. and learned friend the Member for North Tyrone, who has always spoken up for justice in Ireland. The right hon. gentleman speaks of his political virtue. I do not believe the man who talks about his political virtue. I would not believe a woman who boasted of her virtue of the other kind. I think the Member for North Mayo has done good work in exposing the system of the administration of justice in Ireland. I shall watch the promotion of Sergeant Sullivan with great interest, and I shall keep an eye on him as well as on the other minions of English administration in that country.

MR. KILBRIDE (Galway, N.): It is a notorious fact that Mr. Kelly was the solicitor for Sullivan when this case was originally heard, and if the right hon. Gentleman was so extremely anxious that the case should be free from any insinuation with regard to the motives of the

Crown why did he send it to Sligo to the sessions where Mr. Kelly was bound to prosecute? And I should also like to know from the Attorney-General why this sum of £400 in the Estimates was transferred. Was this expended on the trial? When this man Sullivan was tried at Sligo a whip was sent round to the constabulary to subscribe for the expenses of the case, and it met with a very poor response. Where did the money come from to pay that expense? Did the Crown find it? The general opinion in Ireland is that the money that was paid for the defence of Sullivan was found by Dublin Castle. I notice under sub-head H the £400 has been transferred for expenses of actions taken against magistrates, the constabulary, and others for acts done by them in execution of their duty. What is the meaning of that transference?

MR. ATKINSON: That £400 which was transferred was money which was used for the payment of the sheriffs' expenses. There is now a large grant of £8,000 for this purpose, and that £400 now forms part of that. It had nothing to do with the expenses of this case.

MR. KILBRIDE: The right hon. Gentleman also quoted the circular of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose when he was Secretary for Ireland. There is no Crown solicitor in any county of Ireland who is personally acquainted with all the peculiar characteristics of the people in Ireland. He gets his information very largely from local sub-inspectors of the police as to the religion and politics of every man on the panel; and here you have the Crown prosecutor of Sligo asking nine Catholics to stand aside from the jury, not from anything in his own knowledge, but from information from Sergeant Sullivan's superiors or equals. It is impossible so long as this jury packing goes on at the instance of the police to get justice. The conduct of the Crown in the Sullivan case is the usual attitude of the Crown in all cases, and it is weakening materially the little respect which the Irish people have for it.

*MR. DAVITT: The Attorney-General in his reply to my speech employed some rather lurid adjectives in condemnation of the charge which I made against the administration of the law in Ireland. I

Mr. Kilbride.

listened with equanimity, because I felt that he would be compelled to do so in support of his duty. I adhere to every statement that I made, and I reiterate every charge. I think the charges that I have made—the main charge I have made—is proved up to the hilt, and whatever the result of the Division of this House may be, the verdict in Ireland will be “The judge is condemned, when the guilty goes free.”

MR. WILLIAM MOORE (Antrim, North): I have listened to the statements made by Members on both sides of the House, and have been able to form my own judgment. In the first place, I exceedingly deprecate the remarks which were made by the Member for South Donegal about the profession of the man Leonard McNally, who was a man who disgraced his profession, and whose name was execrated by every person in the country, who took up the instruction for the defence, and then acted as a traitor. He was unworthy of his position, and the hon. Gentleman opposite is unworthy of his profession when he tells the House that the same thing might occur again at the Irish Bar. Amongst the rank and file of the Irish Bar there is almost an impossibility of such treachery occurring. If this man Sullivan was guilty, and if it was proved that he was guilty, and if the House believed he was guilty, I should attach considerable importance to what had fallen from the hon. Gentlemen opposite. But I have learnt some of the maxims of the English law, and one of them is that according to the English Constitution every man is deemed to be innocent until the contrary is proved. In this case two juries had declined to find Sergeant Sullivan guilty, and, notwithstanding that, the hon. Gentleman opposite got up and tried to blacken this man in his profession simply because he is a policeman, and for no other reason. Only expert evidence was given, and I ask the House whether it would hang a dog on the uncorroborated evidence of an expert? I cannot see where the complaint comes in of sending Mr. Wright down instead of The Macdermot. Mr. Wright was the leader of the Ulster Circuit for many years, and The Macdermot the leader of the other circuit, and the only difference between the two is that The Macdermot wore a white waistcoat and George Wright wore a black. I cannot see why a complaint should be

made because one counsel was sent down instead of another. The only crime of this unfortunate policeman was that he had served his superiors faithfully and loyally.

Question put.

The Committee divided: Ayes, 95 ;
Noes, 147. (Division List No. 205.)

AYES.

Allen, W. (Newc. under Lyme)
Ambrose, Robert
Austin, M.
Barlow, John Emmott
Beaumont, Wentworth C.B.
Billson, Alfred
Blake, Edward
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Caldwell, James
Carville, Patrick G. Hamilt'n
Cawley, Frederick
Clough, Walter Owen
Commings, Andrew
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crilly, Daniel
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Curran, Thomas (Sligo S.)
Daly, James
Dalziel, James Henry
Dillon, John
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Duckworth, James
Edwards, Owen Morgan
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Evershed, Sydney
Farrell, James J. (Cavan, W.)
Farrell, Thos. P. (Kerry, S)
Fenwick, Charles
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir W. (Derby Co.)

Fox, Dr. Joseph Francis
Gibney, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gourley, Sir Edwd. Temperley
Hammond, John (Carlow)
Hayden, John Patrick
Healy, Thomas J. (Wexford)
Healy, Timothy M. (N. Louth)
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Chas. H.
Hogan, James Francis
Holland, Wm. H. (York, W.R.)
Horniman, Frederick John
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Joicey, Sir James
Jordan, Jeremiah
Kilbride, Denis
Lambert, George
Lawson, Sir W. (Cumbland)
Leuty, Thomas Richmond
Lloyd-George, David
Logan, John William
Macaleese, Daniel
McDonnell, Dr. M. A. (Qn.'s C.)
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
McDermott, Patrick
McGhee, Richard
Maddison, Fred.
Moore, Arthur (Londonderry)
Morley, Charles (Breconshire)
Morris, Samuel
Morton, E. J. C. (Devonport)
Moss, Samuel
Murnaghan, George

O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
O'Connor, Jas. (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Malley, William
Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)
Pilkington, Sir G. A. (Lancs SW)
Pinkerton, John
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
Richardson, J. (Durham, S.E.)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Samuel, J. (Stockton on Tees)
Scott, Chas. Prestwich (Leigh)
Steadman, William Charles
Strachey, Edward
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Sullivan, T. D. (Donegal, W.)
Thomas, David A. (Merthyr)
Tuite, James
Warner, Thomas Courtney T.
Williams, John Carvell (Notts)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, John (Govan)
Wilson, Jos. H. (Middlesbro')
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Mr. Davitt and Captain
Donelan.

NOES.

Allhusen, Augustus Henry E.
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. J. FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Balcarras, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (Leeds)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barnes, Frederic Gorell
Barton, Dunbar Plunket
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Bemrose, Sir Henry Howe
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. Sir John
Brookfield, A. Montagu
Brymer, William Ernest
Bullard, Sir Harry
Butcher, John George
Carlile, William Walter
Carson, Rt. Hon. Edward
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chaloner, Capt. R. G. W.
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Bir.)
Chamberlain, J. An. (Worc'r.)
Chelsea, Viscount

Clare, Octavins Leigh
Cochrane, Hn. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Cooke, C. W. Radcliffe (Herefd)
Cox, Irwin Ed. Bainbridge
Cruddas, Wm. Donaldson
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Curzon, Viscount
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davies, Sir H. D. (Chatham)
Denny, Colonel
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Dorington, Sir John Edward
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Douglas-Pennant, Hon. E. S.
Doxford, William Theodore
Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edw.
Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir Robt. Penrose-
Flower, Ernest
Folkestone, Viscount

Gedge, Sydney
Gibbons, J. Lloyd
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, Hon. John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir J. Eldon
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Ld. George
Hamond, Sir C. (Newcastle)
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert W.
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Heath, James
Heaton, John Henniker
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Howard, Joseph
Hutchinson, Capt. G. W. Grice-
Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Jolliffe, Hon. H. George
Kewick, William
Knowles, Lees
Lawrence, Sir E. D. (Corn.)
Lawrence, W. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Lecky, Rt. Hon. W. E. H.
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Llewelyn, Sir D. (Swansea)
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.

Loder, Gerald W. Erskine
Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Liverpool)
Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
Lowles, John
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Macartenev, W. E. Ellison
Macdonald, John Cumming
McArthur, Charles (Liverpool)
McIver, Sir L. (Edinburgh, W.)
McKillop, James
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Milton, Viscount
Moore, William (Antrim, N.)
More, Robt. J. (Shropshire)
Morgan, Hn. Fred (Monmouth)
Morrell, George Herbert
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Northcote, Hn. Sir H. Stafford

O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parkes, Ebenezer
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, R. (Lancs, Newton)
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Rentoul, James Alexander
Ridley, Rt. Hn. Sir Matthew, W.
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Russell, Gen. F. S. (Cheltenham)
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Seton-Karr, Henry
Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
Sidebottom, Wm. (Derbysh.)
Stanley, Lord (Lancashire)
Stock, James Henry
Strauss, Arthur
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley

Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxford U.)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Valentia, Viscount
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
Whiteley, H. (Ashton-under-L.)
Williams, Joseph Powell (Birm.)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, George
Young, Commander (Berks, E.)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Sir William Walrond and
Mr. Anstruther.

Original question again proposed.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): I rise to call attention to the recent murder in County Kilkenny of a shopkeeper. This man had gone to a policeman and asked for a small account which was owing, whereupon the policeman put up his rifle and shot the man through the heart. No sooner was the policeman convicted of murder than he was reprieved, though there was no suggestion that the man was innocent or that he had not had a fair trial. Recently, too, a soldier was charged in court with bigamy, and bigamy under most disgraceful circumstances. He was convicted, but he had not been in prison three days when he was discharged a free man. Why were these men not punished as ordinary citizens are? We are always glad to see mercy extended to any man, but I must say that it is a public scandal that a man who was collecting a debt in the broad daylight should be met with a policeman's rifle and shot through the heart, and that that policeman should be reprieved and in a few years regain his liberty. In the second case, despite the fact that the prisoner had heartlessly ruined a young girl, we find that because he had served in the Ashantee War he only got three years' penal servitude and did not serve for three minutes. Complaint has been made of packing juries. It is not the Attorney-General who packs juries, but it is the Act of 1876, because you have so arranged matters by the system of valuation that it is practically impossible for a Catholic to get on a jury. The system is at fault. So far as the general body of the people is concerned, justice in Ireland

is dead—or, rather, it is not dead, because it has never existed. Again, there is in the Vote an item of £8,820 as repayment to sheriffs. It is necessary to have sheriffs: but I ask whether it is true that this sum is confined to county sheriffs, and that city sheriffs in such places as Dublin, Limerick, Waterford, Belfast, and Derry are not remunerated for their trouble? No doubt it is some Treasury official engaged in the robbery of Ireland who makes this distinction between city sheriffs and county sheriffs, in order that the money may get it to the pockets of the landlord class.

MR. ATKINSON: I think that all the circumstances of the case of the policeman referred to by the hon. Member show that when he committed the crime he was—if not actually insane—labouring under the greatest excitement. The jury strongly recommended him to mercy, and it was by reason of that recommendation that the sentence of death was commuted to penal servitude for life. In the case of the soldier, there were also extenuating circumstances, and he was discharged on the recommendation of the judge. The reasons for the distinction between city sheriffs and county sheriffs are—first, that gentlemen appointed to serve as city sheriffs are not bound to accept the office, while it is a misdemeanour, under an Act centuries old, for gentlemen appointed county sheriffs to refuse to serve; and, secondly, while the fees received by city sheriffs cover their expenses, county sheriffs are actually out of pocket. The same rule applies in England. The sum of £20,000 is voted yearly to recoup the expenses of county sheriffs in England.

*MR. HEMPHILL: With regard to the explanation of my right hon. and learned friend—first as to the reprieve of the prisoners, it does seem a strange coincidence that one of them should have been a policeman and the other a soldier. With regard to the explanation as to the policeman, if he was a lunatic I apprehend that he would have been sent to Dundrum criminal lunatic asylum. He must either have been a lunatic and not properly convicted in point of law, or else he must have been responsible for his actions and guilty. Why, if he was a lunatic, should he now be sentenced to penal servitude? With regard to the other case, I have a very strong recollection that the learned judge who tried the case, in his charge to the jury, commented very much on the enormity of the offence, and I have a distinct recollection that there was a great deal of astonishment felt when it was announced that the bigamist was reprieved. I think both these cases furnish a very strong argument in favour of what we have more than once contended for—viz., that there should be a court of criminal appeal, or that there should be something which would prevent an arbitrary and capricious exercise of the prerogative of the Crown, which undoubtedly is calculated to outrage the public conscience. I believe my right hon. and learned friend, as far as my recollection goes, is quite accurate when he says that there is no compulsion on a person who is selected as a city sheriff to act, but there is undoubtedly compulsion, and always was, for centuries, on county sheriffs to act on appointment.

MR. FLYNN: I cannot absolve the right hon. Gentleman from responsibility for the practice we are condemning, because he expressly stated, in reply to a question of mine, that it was by his special directions that the Crown Solicitor took these proceedings, and the large number of jurors were challenged. I for one shall divide on every occasion, while I have a seat in this House, to call the attention of Parliament to the system of jury packing.

MR. DAVITT: Was the assistance given by the Government to Constable Sullivan confined to the Sligo case, or was assistance also given in the Dublin case, where the jury disagreed?

MR. ATKINSON: I could not answer that question; I do not know how that is.

Question put, and agreed to.

Resolution to be reported.

CLASS II.

Motion made, and Question proposed—

"That a sum, not exceeding £27,479, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, for the salaries and expenses of the Local Government Board in Ireland."

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I regret we have not had an opportunity of considering more fully many important matters in connection with the administration of the Local Government Board in Ireland, particularly in view of the passage of the Local Government Act of last year. Of all the anomalous and ridiculous situations that have been created in Ireland for a lengthy period, probably the most ridiculous was that created by the passing of that Act. No doubt the Act was designed for the benefit of the people of Ireland, and it is also true it could not be put into force without much difficulty, but it could not have been more unfortunately circumstanced than that it should have been put into the hands of the existing Local Government Board to carry out. In the first place, by the passing of the Registration Act, an enormous burden has been thrown upon the people. Every local government area had to change completely its system of compiling the register. In the County of Longford, with which I am intimately associated, the cost of producing the register jumped from £60 under the old system to £940. The blame is entirely with the Local Government Board, because they delayed the issuing of the necessary instructions, and when the printing of these registers had to be undertaken only a limited time was given, so that, practically, *carte blanche* had to be given to pay any price in order to get the registers printed in time. This at once added 1½d. in the pound to the rates in County Longford. Then came the question of the elections. In the matter of the publication of Orders the Local Government Board "take the cake." There was a fresh set of Orders

issued every week, one contradicting the other.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: Which Orders?

MR. J. P. FARRELL: The Orders fixing the areas of charge, for one thing. The Local Government Board first ordered certain notices to be issued at a certain date; that date was found inconvenient and changed. They then proceeded to allot the number of candidates who would be eligible for election in each area, and that eventually had to be countermanded. So that the cost of assembling the County Council in County Longford rose from a very small sum to £980, adding another 1½d. in the £ to the rates. In other counties the expenses were enormous, the amount in Cork being £5,420; Mayo, £3,425; Cavan, £1,150; and so on. There may be something in the argument that we cannot expect to get such a great change made without considerable expenditure. The Government may also claim that we get half the Agricultural Grant; I may say with regard to that, that that is one of the great disappointments of the Act. Very considerable expectations were entertained that the sum which was to go in relief of rates would be considerably more than it turned out to be. The Chancellor of the Exchequer practically told us in terms that we should get something approaching £750,000 as the Irish share of the Agricultural Grant, but when the Treasury experts came to make their calculations we were deprived of £25,000 of that amount.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: I distinctly said that I estimated the sum would be about £730,000.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: My impression was, and the impression on the minds of the Irish people still is, that we have been deprived by the Treasury experts of at least £25,000. Then we have to compensate so many officials that the Act has become a very severe curse. In the olden times the county cess collector was an officer whom it was not necessary to dismiss; he was simply employed from assize to assize; but under the Act he becomes entitled to a gratuity. This gratuity may not exceed the amount of five years of his net emoluments; but that

Mr. J. P. Farrell.

basis has confused and confounded everybody, including the Local Government Board itself. The County of Longford became terrified by the amount which is claimed, and recently applied to the Local Government Board for information as to the meaning of "net emoluments," and the reply was that the Local Government Board "are unable to lay down a specific interpretation of the expression." In the case of the county I am citing the amount claimed for compensation is £3,840, so that the setting of the Act into operation in that county has cost the ratepayers nearly £6,000.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: As to the total amount of compensation, half of that is recoverable.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: That information will be gratefully received by the people who are to pay this compensation. Then we come to the machinery by which these county councils are to work. Under the old system the rate collector had to make up his own books, and so on, and in that way a great amount of labour was performed practically gratuitously for the people. In the book required under the new Act there are 22 columns across, and the county clerk will have to enter up the name of every ratepayer in the county, and all the particulars attached to the rating across these 22 columns. I asked Mr. Edgeworth, the clerk in the County of Longford, to give me some data to go upon as to the work involved, and he says:

"County Councils Order, 1899, Act 23 (4) directs that duplicate rate book should be furnished to clerks of unions not later than three days after making of rate. Longford is one of the smallest counties, but it contains over 15,000 ratings, in respect of each of which a separate calculation of the rate on agricultural land and of the rate on buildings has to be made, to say nothing of calculation for separate charges. Allowing three minutes for the double calculation and entering the same across all the columns, over 30 clerks would be required, working eight hours a day, to get it done in three days. Allowing one-third of the time for making the duplicates, would bring the number of clerks required to 40. The Local Government Board have admitted the absurdity by suggesting that if enough clerks were employed it might be done in a fortnight."

A more damaging statement as to the way in which the Act works could not

have been made than that of this Unionist clerk in Longford. He further remarks that :

"If these 15,000 collectors' books, 15,000 notices to pay, and 15,000 receipts have to be filled up in my office, the clerical staff required for that purpose would be pretty large."

The right hon. Gentleman could not possibly have been aware when he introduced the Act of the anomalies and absurdities which would be set up. Then there is the keeping of the accounts, with regard to which the clerk says :

"The requirement that a separate ledger account, involving entries in 22 columns, or a third of a million of entries each half year in this one book, alone means a good deal of clerical work."

The Act was passed with the assistance of this side of the House in the hope that it would not only take the iron heel of ascendancy off our necks, but that it would be an advantage to the people; but what you have given with one hand you have taken away with the other. As regards the next item in the book-keeping arrangements, the County Clerk of Longford says :

"The books to be kept include (1) a general ledger with 28 heads, of which some have seven sub-heads; (2) financial minutes; (3) financial statement, receipts; (4) financial statement, expenditure; (5) register, separate charges; (6) register, mortgages; (7) financial statement book, separate charges; (8) three rate ledgers, which mean a good deal of clerical work."

I do not impute to the right hon. Gentleman collaboration in the preparation of this extraordinary set of books, I am sure he was never consulted about it; but it is through the want of system at the Local Government Board that this method has been set up. My proposition is to go back to the old system. What will be the state of things if the county council refuses to give extra clerical assistance? How will it be possible to set up the proper books, considering that only three days are allowed for their preparation and the enormous calculations in connection therewith?

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: I understand they have two months.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: The right hon. Gentleman is misinformed entirely. They may have next year. Two months are

given under the Act, but in consequence of the blundering of the Local Government Board on this occasion only three days were given. I am not making a personal attack on the right hon. Gentleman, but this is the only opportunity we have of bringing these anomalies to his notice, in the hope of getting them redressed. I believe every Member would be glad to see this Act work smoothly, and I, for my part, declare that it is my intention, as a member of a County Council, to do all I can to make it work smoothly. But how can we do it unless assisted by the parent body, which controls the whole thing? If an enormous amount of work, such as this, costing a large sum to carry out, is thrown upon the county councils, does the right hon. Gentleman expect them to efficiently discharge their duties? The right hon. Gentleman has succeeded in throwing upon the county councils an immense responsibility, because it is on their unfortunate heads that the blame will inevitably recoil when it is discovered that this Act cannot be worked either as economically or as efficiently as was the old system.

I am not referring to the grand juries at all, but I am speaking of the old system of the collection of rates under the boards of guardians. Now, what state of things as regards finance has the Local Government Board precipitated upon the country? By an Order in Council the grand jurors were directed to pass presentments for the payment of contractors up to the time that the powers of the grand jury expired, and also to pay for those contracts up to next September—that is for eleven months; and they let them go out of office without collecting a penny of this money. In the County of Longford there was a special Order issued. The liabilities which we shall have to meet amount to £11,000 up to the 13th of next September, and we have not got a penny in the treasury. When the money was received there were so many claims upon it that I don't think it lasted more than half an hour. We have £11,000 to provide to pay for the road contracts, to keep the unions going, to pay for the district councils, the election expenses, and the clerical staff. If the proper steps had been taken by the Local Government Board the grand jury should have found this money before they went out of office. However, they

did not do this, for they simply put on the blister and went out of office without doing anything to pay their way, and the County Council will have to borrow this £11,000 at six per cent. interest. I say that if the Local Government Board had taken proper precautions we should not have been forced to undergo this loss, and I appeal to the right hon. Gentleman to provide some means whereby a loss such as this shall be made good from the next grant. I know that I am standing in the way of hon. Members who are perhaps much more qualified to deal with the subject and are much more eloquent than I am. There is another matter, however, which is of very considerable importance. We find, after all the luring hopes which were held out to us when this Act was passed, that our powers are very limited indeed. Having provided for the district councils and boards of guardians, and paid contractors for the contracts left by the late lamented grand juries, we find that the total sum over which we shall have control will be less than £1,000 a year. The action of the Local Government Board in this matter has very largely helped to bring home to the people of Longford, at all events, the object-lesson of Home Rule. As I was very doubtful about the smallness of our spending powers, I made inquiries, and I am informed by a very good authority, to whom I am sure the right hon. Gentleman will give credence, that what I have stated is a fact. My informant states:

"I do not know whether you can go into the general provisions of the Act. If so, you can point out that the whole and sole business over which the Longford County Council have any sort of control is less than £1,000 a year, which is the cost of the roads now actually falling out of contract for new contracts, and these they can veto as they come up to the County Council, and that is all they can touch. All the other payments—to guardians, to district councils, to officials, to contractors under existing contracts, which amount to over £25,000 a year—they can no more touch than you can touch the Lord Chancellor's salary; in fact, the cheques might just as well be filled by me without reference to the Council for any power which they have to deal with them."

I think that is a disappointing announcement. These councillors are, no doubt, humble men, and they have, I fear, entered upon a task which will not be grateful in its results. I do not wish to refer to individual members of the Local

Government Board, but I do say that a more scandalous and outrageous statement was never made by a member of any governing body than was made by Mr. Richard Bagwell, who, at a dinner in Dublin, declared that the Act was the worst that had ever been passed by any Government.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: He said it was the worst drafted Act.

MR. FARRELL: I am referring to what appeared in the newspaper report, and I think the right hon. Gentleman is getting unnecessarily heated over this official, who has not been particularly polite to him. I do not know that I have very much more to say. What I desire is that this Act should work out fairly well, and give satisfaction, and I give the right hon. Gentleman credit for the very best intentions in passing it. In all sincerity and truth, I say that the management of this Act in its initiatory stages by the Local Government Board has been simply scandalous, for they have imposed upon us an immense burden, and they know nothing about what they are doing, and the country at large will have to suffer very heavily for the folly of the Local Government Board. The right hon. Gentleman has a great many duties to discharge, I know, and he has far too many duties if he attempts to discharge them all. I think, however, that he would occupy himself in a manner that would be more grateful to the people of Ireland if he would institute an inquiry into the scandalous anomalies which have been created under this Act, and more especially if he would take into account, not only the book-keeping arrangements, but also the arrangement in connection with the giving of the Agricultural Grant. In this respect alone the Irish people have lost fully £25,000, which they would otherwise have got. No doubt the right hon. Gentleman is entitled to some thanks for the passing of this Act, but not for the giving of the money; because it is the money belonging to the people of Ireland, and which is lawfully due to them. I sincerely hope that he will take into his consideration the few points which I have endeavoured to make, and I hope he will see his way to simplify the arrangements for the working of this Act.

Mr. J. P. Farrell.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I desire to say that this Mr. Bagwell had no particular qualifications which entitled him to be made a Commissioner, and he was just about as much fitted for the post as the doorkeeper of this House. He had never had any experience of official life, and the Government gave him as a clean present £1,000 per annum; and having got his job and his salary paid quarterly, instead of taking it and being contented with his good fortune, and thanking the Lord when every quarter-day came round, he attends, of all places in the world, a dinner of that grateful body the land agents of Ireland who met in Dublin. There Mr. Bagwell, who was in receipt of his first quarter's salary, had the impudence to describe this Act as the worst that had ever been passed by Parliament. This official, with his £1,000 a year in his breeches pocket, goes down to this land agents' dinner and poses as a high authority upon draughtsmanship. If I had had to deal with him, I would have draughted him out of the Local Government Board altogether, and sent him back to look after his bullocks. The attack this official made was not only an attack upon our system of local government, but it was an attack upon the House of Commons and upon the entire Administration. What assurance can the members of these local bodies have of fair and impartial administration from gentlemen animated by a spirit of this kind? Of course, I should be far from making such comments as these upon some of the gentlemen which are the older officials, but I think the Government made a great mistake in parting with Sir George Morris just at the moment when this Act was coming into operation.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: As I have already explained, Sir George Morris's time for retirement came round, and he expressed his desire to resign.

MR. T. M. HEALY: All I have to say, then, is that Bagwell was a very poor exchange for Morris, who had served them for twenty years, and I never remember a single complaint being raised against him. No doubt Sir George Morris would have stayed on if he had been offered four or five years more service instead of being asked to go on for another year. I entirely disagree with the view that it is the duty of the Local Government Board

to give legal opinions, because when they do this they are generally wrong. I do not think they have any function of that kind whatsoever. But what we may fairly expect of them is this—that they will keep in stock in their offices in Dublin the whole of the papers and documents to which the new Act refers. One of the chief things dealt with by the Act is the question of compensation, and you will find, if you endeavour to study all the Local Government Act, that the compensation to be given has to be in accordance with the Civil Service rules. I hunted for a copy of these rules through the Dublin library and the library of this House, and then, in despair, I wrote for a copy of the Civil Service rules to the Local Government Board, and the reply was that they had not a copy in the office, but that I could get them from a bookseller. There is not a single person in Ireland who can obtain these rules. With regard to the new system of keeping accounts the representative for North Armagh has already stated that there they will have to build new offices to hold the clerks required by the new system. It is no use, however, decrying this Act, and I congratulate the Government and the right hon. Gentleman upon passing it, although there is a good deal of extravagance in the system imposed. I may say that 40 clerks will be required in Cork to do what two clerks did under the grand jury system. There are 110 ratings in the County of Cork, and if you multiply that by the 24 columns which are to be filled up twice a year in the large form which has already been shown by the hon. Member who has just sat down you get some millions of entries, and for what purpose? Why simply to satisfy the Bagwells of the Local Government Board. It is not merely the question of expense with which we are concerned, but there is also our credit as administrators at stake. When the next Home Rule Government comes in power—which will be very shortly—probably the right hon. Gentleman himself will get up from the wrong side of the Table and quote this as an instance of the horrible system of misgovernment in the County of Cork. I venture to say that every Primrose League in the country at the next election will have this case of extravagance embodied in a pamphlet, and the electors

will be asked, "Can you trust the Government of Ireland to the hands of extravagant 'jobbers' like those in the County of Cork?" When they are asked to render a reason for this, they will tell you that it is the law of the land. All I say is, that if it is the law it ought to be changed, and the right hon. Gentleman ought to bring in a Bill to effect this alteration, in the interests of economy. We hear a great deal of the county councils in England, but I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman if there is anything in the English or the Scotch systems which will compare with the system of which I complain? If the right hon. Gentleman will make a statement upon this subject it will give considerable satisfaction to the people of Ireland. The matter is certainly one which requires elucidation, and I do trust that he will be able to say, if the system as at present maintained is according to law, that he will consent to bring in a Bill to have it altered.

It being midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolution to be reported To-morrow; Committee also report progress; to sit again To-morrow.

MILITARY WORKS (MONEY).

Resolution reported—

"That it is expedient to authorise the issue, out of the Consolidated Fund, in addition to the sums authorised by the Military Works Act, 1897, of such further sums, not exceeding in the whole £4,000,000, as may be required for defraying the cost of certain Military Works and Services, such sums to be raised in manner provided by the said Act."

Resolution agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Wyndham and Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.

MILITARY WORKS BILL.

"To make further provision for defraying the expenses of certain Military Works and other Military Services," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed.—[Bill 249.]

LINCOLNSHIRE CORONERS BILL.

[Lords.]

Read a second time, and committed for To-morrow.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. CALDWELL: Upon the Motion for the Adjournment of the House, I desire to ask the First Lord of the Treasury what is the business which he intends to take on Monday next?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not wish absolutely to pledge myself, but I think there can be no doubt that we shall propose to take as the first Order on Monday the Second Reading of the Secondary Education Bill, and as the second Order the Bill of my right hon. friend the Secretary for Ireland, the Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Bill.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): And when will the Tithes Bill come on?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: On Tuesday next.

Adjourned at five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, 23rd June 1899.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with :

DERBY CORPORATION TRAMWAYS, ETC.

WALKER AND WALLSEND UNION GAS (ELECTRIC LIGHTING).

LOWESTOFT PROMENADE PIER.

Also the Certificate that no Standing Orders are applicable to the following Bill :

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 5).

Also the Certificates that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have not been complied with :

GODALMING CORPORATION WATER.

BRADFORD TRAMWAYS AND IMPROVEMENT.

BEXHILL AND ROTHERFIELD RAILWAY.

And also the Certificates that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with—

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 18).

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 19).

PIER AND HARBOUR PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 1).

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (MONEY).

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

BEXHILL AND ROTHERFIELD RAILWAY BILL.

GODALMING CORPORATION WATER BILL.

BRADFORD TRAMWAYS AND IMPROVEMENT BILL.

Examiner's Certificates of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred

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to the Standing Orders Committee on Tuesday next.

GREAT WESTERN AND GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY COMPANIES BILL.

A witness ordered to attend the Select Committee.

FISHGUARD AND ROSSLARE RAILWAYS AND HARBOURS BILL.

The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn.

GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY BILL.

Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn ; read, and ordered to lie on the Table ; the Orders made on the 9th of May and Thursday last discharged ; and Bill committed.

MILTON CREEK CONSERVANCY BILL.

Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn ; read, and ordered to lie on the Table ; the Orders made on the 8th of June and Thursday last discharged ; and Bill committed.

CENTRAL LONDON RAILWAY BILL.

Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn ; read, and ordered to lie on the Table : the Orders made on the 9th of May and the 12th inst. discharged ; and Bill committed.

FISHGUARD WATER AND GAS BILL.

Reported with Amendments.

STOCKPORT CORPORATION WATER BILL.

Reported from the Select Committee with Amendments.

BELFAST AND NORTHERN COUNTIES RAILWAY BILL.

The Queen's Consent signified, and Bill reported without Amendment.

SOUTH EASTERN AND LONDON, CHATHAM, AND DOVER RAILWAY COMPANIES BILL.

Reported with Amendments.

O

FYLDE WATER BOARD BILL [Lords.]

BARRY RAILWAY BILL.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY (NEW RAILWAYS) BILL.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY (VARIOUS POWERS) BILL.

AIRE AND CALDER NAVIGATION BILL.

Reported with Amendments.

WEST GLOUCESTERSHIRE WATER BILL.

Reported with an Amendment.

TRAMWAYS ORDERS CONFIRMATION (No. 2) BILL. [Lords.]

Reported from the Select Committee without Amendment, and committed to a Committee of the whole House.

TRAMWAYS ORDERS CONFIRMATION (No. 3) BILL. [Lords.]

Reported from the Select Committee with Amendments, and committed to a Committee of the whole House.

GOOLE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL BILL.

Leave given to the Select Committee to adjourn over Monday next.

DARWEN CORPORATION BILL.

BLACKPOOL IMPROVEMENT BILL.

DUBLIN CORPORATION BILL.

Read 2^a, and committed; the Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE RAILWAY BILL. [Lords.]

GREAT EASTERN RAILWAY (GENERAL POWERS) BILL. [Lords.]

Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

EDINBURGH CORPORATION BILL.

WETHERBY DISTRICT WATER BILL.

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY BILL.

Read 3^a, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 4) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; Read 1^a; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 144.)

DERWENT VALLEY WATER BILL.

HARROW AND UXBRIDGE RAILWAY BILL.

IONIAN BANK BILL.

LONDON, WALTHAMSTOW AND EPPING FOREST BILL.

WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1^a; and referred to the Examiners.

ABERDEEN CORPORATION BILL [Lords.]

Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments: The said Amendments considered, and agreed to.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 18) BILL.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 19) BILL.

PIER AND HARBOUR PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 1) BILL.

To be read 2^a on Monday next.—(*The Earl of Dudley.*)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDER (HOUSING OF WORKING CLASSES) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (POOR LAW) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (GAS) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 5) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 7) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 8) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 9) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 11) BILL.

To be read 2^a on Tuesday next.—(*The Lord Harris.*)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 1) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS No. 2) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 3) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES) (No. 2) BILL.

To be read 2^a on Tuesday next.—(*The Earl of Denbigh.*)

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION (LONDON) BILL. [Lords.]

House in Committee (according to order); the Amendments proposed by the Select Committee made; Standing Committee negatived; the Report of Amendments to be received on Monday next.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 3) BILL.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES PROVISIONAL ORDER (BORROWSTOUNNESS) BILL.

House in Committee (according to order); Bills reported without Amendment; Standing Committee negatived; and Bills to be read 3^a on Monday next.

PETITIONS.

MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS (BOROUGH FUNDS) ACT, 1872.

Petition for Amendment of, of Corporation of Colchester; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

LONDON GOVERNMENT BILL.

Petition for Amendment of, of Vestry of St. James's, Westminster; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—EASTERN DIVISION.

General Report for the year 1898, by W. E. Currey, Chief Inspector.

TRADE REPORTS, 1899.

Annual Series: No. 2,295. United States (States of Oregon, Idaho, and Washington).

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

PILOTAGE.

Abstract of Returns relating to pilots and pilotage in the United Kingdom (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 284, of Session 1898) (as furnished by the various pilotage authorities), for the year ended 31st December, 1898. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

QUESTIONS.

LAND TENURE IN WALES.

EARL CARRINGTON: My Lords, I rise to call attention to the subject of land tenure in Wales and Monmouthshire, and to ask whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government to initiate any legislation on the subject. I think my first duty is to remind your Lordships that in 1892 the Welsh landlords asked for a Royal Commission to inquire into the subject which I have the honour to bring before your Lordships, but this Commission was refused by the noble Marquess at the head of the Government. In 1893 a Liberal Government came into power, and one of the first things which Mr. Gladstone's Government did was to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into the conditions and circumstances under which the land in Wales and Monmouthshire was held, occupied, and cultivated. It was generally considered to be a very fair Commission. Lord Kenyon and Sir John Llewellyn, two of the best landlords in Wales, represented the landlords' interests. Mr. Griffiths, of Pembrokeshire, and Mr. Richard Jones, of Montgomeryshire, two of the most respected farmers in Wales, represented the tenant farmers. The remaining members were Mr. Brynmor Jones, Q.C., M.P., a Welshman and a county court judge, well acquainted with Welsh life generally; Mr. Groves, chairman of the Monmouthshire County Council; Principal Rhys, of Jesus College, Oxford; Mr. Seebohm, the well-known writer. I was appointed Chairman, and we all took our coats off to the work we had in hand. The Commissioners were occupied in their labours for three years, during the whole of which time we worked very harmoniously and very hard. We sat 80 times in Wales and 19 times in London for the purpose of hearing evidence, and on 23 occasions the number of witnesses who were anxious to appear before us was so large that we had to sit in two Courts. On several occasions we sat from 10 o'clock in the morning until 9 o'clock at night. In London we sat in private 45 times, and we examined in all 1,100 witnesses. Two landlords' protection societies, to watch the landlords' side of the case, were instituted under the management of Mr. Vincent, a barrister, a writer for *The Times*, and a gentleman supposed to have great influence on that

journal. No tenants' organisation for the whole of Wales was formed, but local committees of tenant farmers were formed in most districts, and they had the sympathetic assistance of the vernacular Press. Everywhere we found the truest loyalty towards the Queen and all the Royal Family, and everywhere we received the greatest kindness, civility, and hospitality, and we were at once struck with the good management and liberality of many of the big Welsh landlords, pre-eminent amongst whom, without a single exception, were the Welsh Members of your Lordships' House. Our Report, which has been criticised as being too voluminous, is divided into parts. Book I. presents a general view of the conditions and circumstances under which land in Wales and Monmouthshire is occupied and cultivated, with a history of land tenure in Wales. This portion of the Report was compiled and signed by all the Commissioners, and is, I venture to think, a valuable description of the customs of the Principality in matters relating to agriculture and the farm, and is, as a matter of fact, accepted as a great authoritative work, and will, I believe, as time goes on, become more and more appreciated. Book II. contains the conclusions and recommendations of the Commissioners as to legislative and administrative action. There is first the Report of the majority, then the separate Report of the minority, and, lastly, a summary of recommendations signed by all the Commissioners, which, therefore, constitutes the unanimous Report of the Commission. It is only of this unanimous Report that I wish to speak, and I only need trouble your Lordships with four of the eleven recommendations which it contains. The first of these is more of a statement than a recommendation, and it is to the effect that Wales requires separate legislation. The words of the Report assented to by all the Commissioners are these :

"We think that the circumstances disclosed in regard to Wales by our inquiry urgently call for legislation . . . and it would be expedient to deal with the case of Wales in a separate Bill."

Again, in another paragraph, the minority say :

"We are fully sensible that there may nevertheless be economic differences between the agricultural problems of the two countries requiring careful consideration."

Earl Currington.

This has been denied, but I can only say that those who deny that Wales differs from England are divided into two classes—those who have very small powers of observation, and those who have lived in England and not in Wales, or *vice versa*. The second recommendation is :

"In cases of the death of the owner of an estate, or of the sale of an estate, the tenant should be protected by law in the occupation of his farm at the old rent for three years, instead of one year as at present, provided he fulfils certain conditions."

Of course, the conditions which must be observed are the punctual payment of rent and the proper cultivation of the land in a husbandmanlike manner. There may be objections to this recommendation, but I should like to call your Lordships' attention to the manner in which estates are sold in Wales. When it has been decided to put an estate into the market, one year's notice to quit to every tenant is invariably given, and often the estate is revalued, with a consequent increase in the rents. Notice is given to quit at Michaelmas, and the estate is generally put up for sale in the following June, when the auctioneer is able to say to intending parties :

"If you purchase you have a perfectly free hand. You may allow the tenants to remain at the old rent, you may raise the rent if you please, or you may get rid of the tenant within three months and put in your own men, or farm the land yourselves."

Then the tenant must go, and all the compensation he would get would be under the Agricultural Holdings Act, which is generally acknowledged not to be worth the paper it is written on. Our proposal was that when an estate owner died, or when it is necessary that an estate should be sold, the tenant should be entitled to remain on his farm for three years from the date of sale at the old rent, so as to give him time to look round to provide himself, if necessary, with a new occupation, and so avoid losing the entire fruits of his good industry. This proposal, you will find, was recommended by the whole of the Commissioners. The third recommendation to which I would call your Lordships' attention was :

"In the event of the tenant giving notice to quit, with the view, say, of getting his rent reduced, though he might afterwards make arrangements with his landlord to go on with the farm, or in cases of readjustments of rent

by the landlord, these should be constituted fresh lettings, and the tenant should be compensated for the improvements up to that date under the Agricultural Holdings Act."

This recommendation, which was also agreed to by the Conservative members on the Commission, would secure the reform for which tenant farmers throughout Great Britain have fought so long—namely, compensation to the sitting tenant; and on any re-arrangement of the terms of the tenancy all that the tenant had done would be allowed for before the new rent was fixed. The other recommendation of the unanimous Report, which was intended to prevent capricious evictions, was :

"Notice to quit should be given for specified reasons only, such as non-payment of rent and non-compliance with the terms of agreement, and if given for any other reason the tenant should receive compensation for disturbance, in addition to compensation for his improvements."

It is generally asserted that in Wales there are no such things as evictions, but I will quote one instance that struck me very forcibly. A Mr. Jones stated the following case. His father, Elias Jones, of Tan-y-Castell farm, was the occupier of a farm within sight of Snowdon, in the parish of Dolwyddelan, which his family had occupied for over 500 years. He altogether held three farms, on one of which there stood the old castle of Dolwyddelan, a picturesque spot, in which tradition says Prince Llewellyn himself was born. It was acknowledged that the farmer had built the house and all the walls, and had reclaimed land on the mountain side. Mr. Elias Jones happened to be a Nonconformist, and he happened also to be a Liberal. He was unfortunate enough to fall foul of the parson—he voted in the Liberal interest in 1868, and was promptly given 12 months' notice to quit by his landlord, who turned him out of his house and home, and consequently compelled him to seek a resting place elsewhere. I do not think there is one single Member of your Lordships' House who would not admit that this is a sad and shameful story, but it is absolutely true. And after the man had recited this story he pointed across the table and said to me :

"Mr. Chairman, the man who did this cruel thing was your own uncle, Alberic, Lord Willoughby De Eresby."

Your Lordships laugh, but I do not think Mr. Elias Jones saw anything to laugh at

in it. I say, without fear of contradiction, that it is a monstrous thing that a man who is the owner of an estate should not be prevented by law from doing such a cruel thing as to evict a man without compensation, at 12 months' notice, whose family has been 500 years on the ground. My uncle inherited the Welsh estate which came into the family in the 14th century. Since that time the old house on the estate in which he lived, and which, by a generous arrangement with my cousin, Lord Ancaster, is now in my possession, has never been sold or let to a stranger. The owners of the estate took a great pride in maintaining the most friendly relations with their tenants, and I may mention, as an instance of the good feeling which existed, the fact that when my grandfather, who was universally known throughout North Wales as "the good Lord Willoughby," paid his annual visitor to Gwydyr he was invariably drawn from Bettws, a distance of three miles, by the tenantry on the estate. That feeling has been kept up, and now exists in a marked degree in the case of Lord Ancaster, my cousin, who, under our grandfather's will, inherited the vast estates in Lincolnshire and Scotland, as well as in Wales, which were added to already very large property in Lincolnshire. Lord Ancaster has kept up the traditions of the family, and is well known as one of the most generous and practical landlords in the whole of the United Kingdom. In the same year (1868) tenants of a whole district in Cardiganshire were evicted for voting contrary to the wishes and proclivities of their landlord. It will probably be said that some of these evictions happened years ago, and are now forgotten. It may be true that the landlords have forgotten, but not so the evicted tenants, who never forget their feelings on being evicted. But is it true that tenants have not been cleared off their farms during more recent times? In Denbighshire a Mr. Pochin bought a property 20 years ago when there were 25 tenants on the estate, but at the present moment, out of these 25 he has only four of them left. Only those with a knowledge of Welsh customs and conditions of farming can estimate the state of feeling which exists in consequence of these occurrences. I think I have said enough on this point, but if necessary I could give many more instances of people being turned

out of their farms unjustly. There is one further point to which I should like to draw your Lordships' attention—a point referred to in the minority Report of the Commissioners. In case of something like a general dispute on an estate between the landlord and the tenants as to the rents or the conditions of tenancy, the minority recommended that the Board of Agriculture should appoint a mediator to bring about, if possible, a friendly settlement. But, according to their proposal, he was not to have any compulsory powers, so that, after taking immense trouble in the matter, his advice might at the last moment be rejected by either party or by a few refractory tenants. This in reality meant an optional land court. These suggestions, coming as they did from Conservative landlords, made it very plain that the necessity for an inquiry as to how land was held and occupied in Wales was very urgent, and that drastic changes in land tenure were imperative. On the question of the land court I should like to say a word. I have made it a practice on my estates, when any dispute arises as to rents, to refer the question to an independent arbiter agreed to by both parties, and his decision is final. This custom, I believe, is also adopted on Lord Kintore's estates in Aberdeenshire, and works with the happiest results. I have a tenant whose father began farming our estate 50 years ago, and who has succeeded so well that he now spends £5,000 a year in wages, and occupies four or five farms in North Bucks. He complained of his rent, and said it must be materially reduced. The question was referred to an eminent valuer at Bedford, who went carefully into the matter, and reduced the rent by £100 a year. This the tenant cheerfully accepted, and he went on with his farms. In the south of the County of Bucks another tenant who farms about 800 acres also complained of his rent being too high. We agreed upon an independent valuer, who went through the farms, and in that case the rent was increased by exactly the same amount as the previous decrease. These instances show that landlords need not be afraid of independent arbitration, for there are honest firms of high standing who will do their duty in such cases fearlessly and honourably without seeking to do injustice to either landlord or tenant. My Lords, I have, with great respect, to thank your

Earl Carrington.

Lordships for having given me this opportunity of laying before you the unanimous recommendations of the Royal Commission, and I have only one more word to say in conclusion. When I mentioned my intention of bringing this matter before your Lordships I was asked over and over again what was the use of doing so. People said: "The best you can expect is that the matter will be dismissed with contemptuous indifference: if you bring in a Bill it will be thrown out by an enormous majority, and at the same time will afford an opportunity for opponents of any land reform whatever to hold up the Royal Commission to ridicule and to misrepresent it as an ignorant, unfair, and partisan body created for the sole purpose of attacking property in general and Welsh landlords in particular." My Lords, I have no fear of this, for thirty years' experience of your Lordships' House has taught me that the great majority of Peers are always disposed to treat any proposals for the uplifting of the community with patience and consideration, however distasteful or unpopular they may be to some members of this House. Besides, public opinion on land questions is advancing by leaps and bounds. Every Member on the Opposition front bench in the House of Commons two years ago voted or paired in favour of Mr. Vaughan Davies's Bill to establish a Land Court, and, what I think is more important still, the Conservative candidate for East Denbighshire at the bye-election, having the support of the whole Unionist Party, of every parson and of every squire, publicly pledged himself, if returned, to bring in a Bill embodying the unanimous recommendations of the Welsh Land Commission. In a letter published in *The Times* on January 26, 1898, he said:

"The portion of the Report which was unanimous contains little or nothing to which a Tory could object."

I honestly believe that these recommendations, if carried into law, would do no harm to landlords, while they would give security and confidence to hundreds of farmers whose families have for many hundreds of years been building houses and walls, and reclaiming land higher and higher up the mountain side, and whose only prayer and hope is to be allowed to remain in peace in their old homes, in the land of their fathers, the land they love so well. I beg leave to

ask Her Majesty's Government the question which stands in my name.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL: My Lords, with the permission of my noble friend at the head of the Government I rise to intervene for a few moments between the noble Lord opposite and the answer which he expects to get from the Government. I can assure the noble Earl opposite that nothing which he has said or could say on this question would be received with contumely by any Member of this House. We are all desirous of treating this question earnestly and seriously. I think it possible that, burdened as my noble friend beside me is with his enormous work as Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, he may not be aware of all the facts which bear on this question. In the first place permit me to remind the House that the question of the noble Earl amounts to nothing less than asking the Government whether they are prepared to bring in a new Irish Land Bill for the Principality of Wales and the County of Monmouth. Just think what a question this is to put at this time of the session! We have now reached nearly the end of June, and the noble Earl must have known that the answer, so far as a promise of immediate legislation is concerned, must be in the negative. Perhaps the noble Earl wishes to know whether the Government will introduce a measure in a future session, but he surely cannot expect such an answer from my noble friend now. That is impossible. I will, with your Lordships' permission, place before the House some facts connected with the Welsh Land Commission which have struck me very much. The noble Earl has dwelt very much upon the excellence of his Commission, and upon the distinguished, at least excellent and worthy, men who were upon it. And he has represented it to your Lordships as being a body whose opinion must carry great authority. In one sense I fully agree, but in another sense I venture to disagree. and I take this opportunity of protesting against the system which is growing of legislating by Commissions—not merely governing by Commissions, but legislating by Commissions. What happens in a case of this kind? A Liberal Government is in difficulty. They wish to summon up their resources and to add to

them. They hear of some great portion of the community who are anxious to get something from their neighbours by the help of Parliament, which the Government are not quite prepared to give them. What is the result? They say, "Oh, we will issue a Commission to inquire." The result of that Commission is foreknown. It is generally composed of a majority of men of extreme, or, at least, of strong opinions. There are interspersed a few who have more moderate leanings, and one or two landlords are generally put in just to give the Commission an appearance of impartiality. Then comes the Report, not dealing with facts—that would be legitimate—but dealing with recommendations of the most fundamental character to alter, perhaps, the whole constitution of society. For that work such men, I venture to say, are not competent. It would require such men as the framers of the American Constitution to reconstitute society and rearrange the fundamental laws of property. The gentlemen upon this Commission were no doubt excellently qualified for ascertaining facts, and not one fact, I am sure, would they misrepresent for the purpose of their opinion, but they are not the men to whom I would trust such a great and fundamental question as this. On that Commission, with the exception of the noble Earl opposite, whom we all respect and regard, for he has discharged every public duty to which he has been called in an admirable manner, there was but one gentleman who, I venture to say, has ever been heard of, or probably ever will be heard of, outside the Principality of Wales, and that is Mr. Seebohm. With great respect to the noble Earl opposite and to all his colleagues, I contend that this is not a body to which we can safely trust recommendations of a character such as those to which he has alluded. I should like very much to know how many members of your Lordships' House have ever read the Report, which, with the evidence, extends to some 700 closely printed pages. I have never met a single noble Lord who has read, learned, and inwardly digested that Report. I do not say there is not a great deal of very useful information in it, but it is a most miscellaneous Report. For instance, there is a most entertaining chapter on the wild birds and wild beasts of Wales in the 10th century, and being interested in natural history I was delighted to read it, but I cannot see what

this has to do with the question of land tenure. I have picked some salient facts out of the Report, but I do not think they tell in the direction of the recommendations. In the first place, the Commission found that Wales had been less affected by agricultural distress than either England or Scotland; and, in the second place, that improvements in Wales are, as a rule, made by the landlord and not by the tenant, as in Ireland. The noble Lord shakes his head, but I take this from his own Report, and that fact alters the whole state of the case. A good many of your Lordships were very much exercised about despoiling Irish landlords of a great part of their birth-right, and we always salved our consciences by saying that in Ireland all the improvements were carried out by the tenant. You cannot say that of Wales. There is another fact brought out in the Report which I regard as most striking, because it goes far to show that there has been very little distress in Wales, and that, on the whole, the condition of the country is good. It is this, that there are no vacant farms and no derelict farms in the whole of Wales. The noble Earl (Earl Carrington) says "Hear, hear." Very well; but what is the case in England and in some parts of Scotland? There are to be found farms which cannot be let because agricultural distress is so great that no profit can be made, and others which are worked by the owner with no profit at all; but in Wales there is an eager competition for farms, which forces up the rents. Who are the competitors for these farms? In England and Scotland we suffer from the competition of strangers and foreigners, who bring in produce and undersell us; but are they foreigners who go in to compete against the natives in Wales? Oh, no. The Commission does not say so; it does not even hint it. The high price of Welsh farms is entirely due to the competition of Welshmen among themselves. Does that look like a very unhappy condition of things? The alleged insecurity of tenure, at all events, does not prevent Welsh people competing against themselves. They wish for the farms in order to establish their sons and grandsons in a healthy and, on the whole, a desirable occupation. It seems to me a monstrous proposition to say that this is a state of things which requires revolutionary agrarian legislation. There is another element which increases

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the competition for these farms—namely, the fact that they are mostly small farms, to which the working classes can aspire. I very much wonder who is the writer of the Report.

EARL CARRINGTON: I ought to have explained that, having seen the disadvantage of a Report being written by the secretary at the dictation of the chairman, and thrown at the heads of the Commission, I asked the whole of the members to write what portions they would select themselves, and they did so. It is not, therefore, written by one individual, but piecemeal by the whole. It was put together and talked over line by line, and in that way the Report expresses the unanimous opinion of the Commission.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL: Well, all I can say is there must have been some gentlemen on the Commission who had very strange notions of intelligent and logical propositions. I confess that I have never read a Report so full of bombast and empty phrases, and I certainly have never read a Parliamentary Paper which was in some parts so utterly unintelligible. Here is a specimen:

"With reference to the general economic management of an estate, we think that the influence of the landlord should be exerted towards emphasising its solidarity as an economic unit upon which a particular industry is to be carried on."

I recommend my noble friends who own property in Wales to remember that that is the principle on which they ought to manage their estates. How an estate, especially a Welsh estate, which often extends from the top of a mountain to the bottom of a valley, and in which the principles of farming and everything connected with the land varies, can be "an economic unit," I cannot understand. The sentence I have quoted is nonsense. Let me mention to the House a circumstance about this Commission which happened to myself. I saw in the papers that a certain Scotchman, whom I shall not name, had given the most absurd evidence about Scotland before the Commission, and accordingly I wrote to the secretary and asked to be allowed to appear in order that I might answer some of the statements made by this gentleman. After some correspondence had passed I appeared before the Commission and gave evidence.

They were good enough to be struck with a principle I laid down, which I have often emphasised in this House in connection with the Irish Land Acts—namely, that if the State undertakes to take away a portion of a man's property for public reasons, the principle should be laid down upon which the land is valued or assessed. The noble Earl opposite and his colleagues agreed, and they proposed that the court should be guided by general rules and principles. I looked with great anxiety to see what these general rules and regulations were, but this is what the Commissioners say :

“The first principle which should be laid down is that the court should separate the value of the land in its improved condition from its value in its unimproved condition—that is, its prairie value.”

I ask your Lordships if any one of you can tell me what prairie value is. I have tried, but have failed to get an explanation. I am not certain about the origin of this clap-trap word, but my belief is that it had an American-Irish origin, and that it means, practically, land which has no value at all. Prairie land may be the richest land in the world, and very often is, but the value of everything is in the demand for it, not in its own qualities. A prairie is a country where there is no settlement, where there is no population, and therefore where there is no demand for the land ; and consequently what the Commission meant when they said its “prairie value” was absolutely nothing, as it would have no value. That is the first principle which this Commission says is to be considered by the new Land Courts when they are erected. All this is most miserable clap-trap. I am not going to follow the noble Lord in detail, but I contend that at the present moment no foundation has been laid, in fact, in argument, or in principle by the noble Lord's Commission for any revolutionary Land Act for Wales. That is what I say, and what I hope we shall hear from the noble Marquess is the conclusion to which the Government have come.

***LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY :** My Lords, the noble Earl who presided over the Welsh Land Commission did well in altering the date which had been fixed for his notice, because if the notice had, as was originally intended, followed Lord Inchiquin's notice with reference to the Irish Land Acts, the noble Lord, after

that discussion, could hardly, I venture to think, have proposed legislation of the same sort for Wales. Neither the Commission nor the noble Earl has shown any reason why Wales should have different legislation to England in this matter ; if any place could claim exceptional legislation, it would be Essex. Wales neither requires it nor demands it. The noble Earl stated that the Commission was a very fair one, but my recollection is that it was considered a packed one at the time, and was composed almost entirely of Gladstonians with a set purpose before them. Several of the members of the Commission had fads, and did nothing but put questions which had no reference whatever to land tenure. If the noble Earl had been in his place last Monday he would have heard a lecture on the evils of irrelevancy, deserved by a speech of May 16th, but perhaps not on that occasion, and a statement to the effect that Her Majesty's Government had no time left this session for initiating any legislation, and that the noble Marquess at the head of the Government had a very poor opinion of Royal Commissions ; and I certainly think the Welsh Land Commission has done more to bring Commissions into disrepute than any other Commission I can remember. The members touted for Land Courts and for complaints against landlords, and the noble Chairman touted with such efficiency that he had a complaint made against his own action in selling machinery belonging to his tenant along with a flour-mill. I hasten to say that he was completely cleared of this accusation, but that did not prevent him from encouraging others equally fabulous. Professor Rhys was also accused of harsh action, when Bursar of Jesus College. So far as I can see, the only purpose for bringing forward this question to-day is to cause agitation in Wales, and therefore it is a most mischievous motion.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY) : My Lords, I have not many observations with which to trouble your Lordships. I am afraid that I must plead guilty to the charge in which both the first speakers enveloped the House of not having studied the whole of the Report of the Royal Commission. Your Lordships will appreciate the nature of

the task which would have been imposed upon any Peer who attempted to do that when I tell you that if that Report was placed before me now I should not be able to see any of the noble Lords on the opposite benches.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: You are including the voluminous evidence; the Report is not so large.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: The evidence is by far the most valuable portion of the Report. I only wish to say, in answer to the noble Lord, that we have not the slightest intention during the present session of attacking the Welsh agrarian question, and I do not venture upon any prophecy as to the date when the desire will seize us. I do not myself think that it is desirable to have an agrarian measure for Wales. When the Irish question was put before us we were always told that Ireland was a highly exceptional country, and that the precedents which were created then would not be employed to the injury of property in this island. I am afraid that I always thought this too sanguine a view, but, at all events, such reasons as there were, to which I never attached great value, for the Irish Act, in no way applies to Wales. The proposal of the noble Lord was, I think, enveloped in unnecessary complications. He tried to persuade us that he was simply the mouthpiece of his Commission at the moment when it became unanimous; but he gave us a speech which, if it had any meaning or object at all, must have pointed—and I do not think he will deny it—to the erection of a Land Court with compulsory powers. That is, to give to some persons a right to take money out of the pockets of the landlord and to put it into the pockets of the tenants. To legislation of that kind I certainly feel no inclination whatever, and I believe it would do nothing but harm. The noble Lord read us a summary of the recommendations of the Commission, and reading them over with some skill, I think, he tried to persuade himself and the House that the minority of the Commission had reported in favour of a compulsory Land Court. The compulsory Land Court is the whole kernel and gist of the matter—if it is not compulsory it is nothing—whether this power is to be given to any person, however selected, to take the money from

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the landlord and give it to the tenant. To this legislation certainly the Commission, when it became unanimous, had not committed itself. Whenever a serious proposal of that kind comes before the House then we may deal with it in detail. I can only say now that the whole of the noble Lord's argument appeared to rest on the fact that the rights of property had been occasionally, it may be frequently, abused. But the same argument may be applied to all rights of property in all countries and at all times, and with reference to property of every sort. It is quite as forcible—indeed, it is more—in respect of personal property as between the creditor and the debtor, whose proceedings constitute a great part of the business of the courts of this country. There are numberless cases of gross hardship where the creditor by enforcing his rights has reduced the debtor to misery and despair. But we have not yet been asked on that account to put an end to the right with which the debtor himself has invested the creditor, because it is known that if we did that we would shatter the progress and prosperity of the country and bring all commercial action to an end. There is no other ground than these occasional, and I believe very occasional, abuses of the rights of property, which existed to a much greater extent 30 or 40 years ago than they do now. This House, at least, has never accepted the principle that because of such abuses rights of property should cease. If a compulsory Land Court were erected all independent rights of property in land would cease, and therefore I do not believe that under any circumstances the legislature of this country would adopt so dangerous a principle in the Statute Book as far as it affects this island. I am afraid, therefore, that I can give the noble Lord no hope of an agrarian Bill. He mentioned some other matters that were recommended by a unanimous Commission; they did not seem to me matters of very great importance, and whether they are worthy of legislation I do not know without more careful examination, but the essence of the whole matter is a compulsory Land Court, and to a compulsory Land Court I am entirely opposed.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: My Lords, the noble Marquess in the last few remarks he made, admitted that there

might be, though he did not say that he in any way accepted them, recommendations in the Commissioners' Report apart from the question of the Land Court which might deserve consideration. With regard to the noble Duke, he is undoubtedly well acquainted with the land question, and has paid great attention to it, but he has always seemed to me to look at it from a single point of view—that no concession that can be avoided should be made to tenantry; that the extreme rights of landlords are in accordance with the principles of free contract, and ought to be maintained. He was always a consistent, conscientious, and able opponent of the legislation for which we on this side of the House were responsible in regard to Irish land, and the fault I find with the attitude he has assumed is this, that he has a set of economic principles which are to be applied, like the bed of Procrustes, to all and every situation, whatever it may be. If the tenant does not fit into the bed upon which he has to lie it is his fault, and he must suffer the consequences. I dare say he would say that applies equally to landlords, but I do not believe it is wise or safe to deal, especially with land, upon what I may call cut-and-dried principles. Of course, it does not follow that every proposal for reform of the land laws must be a wise one, but the general and steady and, as I think, indiscriminating opposition of the noble Duke to any reform is not wise, and, I think, is dangerous and injurious to the welfare of the State.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL: That is not my position. I have supported several Amending Acts.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: That is my view of the noble Duke's position; it is my general deduction from the many very able and very interesting speeches I have heard from him on the subject. With regard to the Report itself, I do not think it is open to the criticism of the noble Duke, though he is a master of language and composition; but when he throws so much obloquy on the expression "an estate an economic unit," I venture to differ from him, and to ask him for a precise definition. I take it in its ordinary acceptation, and I do not see why an estate cannot be an economic unit. No doubt the noble Duke will say it is not an economic unit in this sense, that there must be variety of soil and

situation on a large estate; but that also applies to a farm. The soil and situation are not the same all over a farm, but I think the expression is sufficiently intelligible, and it seems to me not open to serious rebuke. For the rest of the Report, the noble Duke dismisses it with the words "miserable clap-trap." There is nothing so easy as to treat a matter in that way. I do not think the grievances of the Welsh tenants can be regarded as miserable clap-trap. My belief is that the Welsh tenants have grievances, and that the case for Wales consists in this, so far as I know—I do not profess intimate acquaintance with the Principality—the general condition of agricultural tenants differs materially and seriously from the condition in England. That would be my answer to the noble Marquess. I do not contest the view of the noble Marquess as to the danger of disturbing a system upon which we have for generations rested in this country; but if there is in one portion of the island a particular position, and a state of things very different from that to which we are accustomed, I do not think it is always wise or safe to apply a principle that may be safely applied to other parts of the country, simply from fear and dread that we may be introducing some economic principle not entirely in accordance with our general views in regard to land. I confess I am not thoroughly acquainted with the evidence given before the Commission, nor do I think it is necessary as a qualification for speaking on the Report unless the evidence comes within moderate compass. I content myself with reading the Report and verifying any particular part of it by reference to the evidence. But I remember on one occasion reading the whole of the evidence taken before a Commission. That was a Commission on Currency, a subject with which it is not safe to deal unless one goes thoroughly into it. Therefore I made an exception in that case. Though I have not read the evidence taken before the Welsh Land Commission, I have read the Report, and it is very remarkable. I sincerely trust that, whether it is dealt with by the present Government or afterwards, we shall not put aside contemptuously as unworthy of attention the grievances of the Welsh farmers. That they have grievances I am convinced, and these arise from a state of things we are not familiar with here, and I do not think we should lay it down that no remedy can

possibly be applied. The noble Duke said with perfect accuracy that the Report is founded on no allegation of agricultural distress, and that in that respect Wales differed from Ireland. It is founded on the grievances of tenant farmers, who hold their land under tenure they consider extremely insecure, and under extreme competition, and these facts show the peculiar position in Wales. The noble Duke asked me if it was usual in Norfolk for tenants to receive notice to quit when an estate was sold. I have never heard of such a thing there. Such a thing being done would probably result in there being no purchaser for the estate. Unlike Wales, we in Norfolk have extreme difficulty in keeping tenants, and it is still more difficult to find new tenants. The whole question deserves careful attention; how far it would be wise to go can only be determined with legislative proposals before us; but I think my noble friend is well justified in bringing the matter forward.

THE DUKE OF ARGYLL: The noble Earl has mistaken my object in referring to the extreme competition in Wales. I quite agree with him that it differentiates the two cases, but the existence of that competition does not tend to prove distrust on the part of the Welsh people of that for which they are competing.

QUEEN'S BIRTHDAY IN CEYLON.

*LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY: My Lords, I rise to ask the Under Secretary for the Colonies what notice the Government has taken, or intends to take, with respect to the proceedings of the Bishop of Colombo in opposition to his Metropolitan, the Bishop of Calcutta, in regard to prayers for the health of Her Majesty the Queen on the occasion of her eightieth birthday. I am perfectly well aware of the fact that the Colonial Office cannot take the same notice of a Bishop's action as they could of the action of a civil servant; but I earnestly hope that the Under Secretary will be able to say something, on behalf of the Government that will in some way remove the bad impression and the discontent which have been caused by the Bishop of Colombo's letter. The facts are these: On May 27th the Bishop of Calcutta wrote the following letter to the Bishops of his province—

"My dear Lord Bishop,—On the 24th day of next month Her Majesty the Queen, Earl of Kimberley.

Empress of India, if her life be spared until then, will complete her eightieth year. I desire to suggest to your Lordship, as to the other Bishops of India and Ceylon, that special services should be held on that day in the churches of the Metropolitan Province. It is a day when the hearts of all Christians who are subjects of the Queen-Empress will naturally turn with devout feelings to Almighty God. The occasion is rather personal, perhaps, than official; but it will be none the less impressive if the services, without much form or ceremony, assume the simple character of thanksgiving for a unique reign, and of intercession for a beloved and venerated Sovereign, under whose sway India and the whole British Empire have enjoyed a singular felicity. If my suggestion approve itself to your Lordship, you will, no doubt, issue such instructions as are necessary to the clergy of your diocese. I have no right to speak for others than members of the Church of England, but the desire for a religious commemoration of Her Majesty's birthday is already felt, as your Lordship knows, in many quarters, and it seems but natural that I should take this opportunity of expressing the hope that the other religious bodies in India, whether Christian or non-Christian, may be willing to unite with the Church in the manifestation of loyalty to the Queen-Empress, and of gratitude for the manifold blessings of her long and illustrious reign. The fact that prayers should ascend simultaneously in her behalf—not from churches only, but from temples, mosques, and synagogues, and other places of religious worship throughout India and Ceylon, will in itself be a striking instance of that unity for which we all, amidst many grave external differences, do yet in our hearts most earnestly long and pray."

I will now read to your Lordships the full text, taken from the *Reis and Rayyet* of May 20th, of the Bishop of Colombo's letter, expressing that dignitary's view of non-Christian prayers, and why Christians cannot join with non-Christians at the celebration by prayer of the Queen-Empress's eightieth birthday:

"Colombo, May 10, 1899.

"Rev. and Dear Brother,—I have received, as you may already have learned from the newspapers, an important letter from the Most Rev. the Metropolitan. His Lordship suggests to us a loyal observance of Her Majesty the Queen's eightieth birthday, and expresses a hope that the occasion may be observed also by other Christians and by non-Christians throughout India and Ceylon. In accordance with our Metropolitan's suggestion I request you to notice the eightieth birthday of Her Most Gracious Majesty on the 24th of this month by the use of special prayers and thanksgiving. These may be adopted either from the form of prayer for the 30th of June, or from the form used at the Jubilee in 1897. Whether our Christian brethren who are not of the Church of England make any special observance of the day or not, we are perfectly sure that their loyal and religious prayers for our beloved Queen will be acceptable to Almighty God. I must briefly state why I do

not ask you to join in hoping that, simultaneously with the prayers of the Church, prayers may be offered in non-Christian places of worship. The letter reached me on Sunday evening the 7th of May, and seeing that the Standing Committee of the Diocese was to meet on Tuesday, the 9th, I welcomed the opportunity of consulting its members about the Metropolitan's suggestion, as I have done in many similar cases. The following resolution was then unanimously carried in a meeting of our clergy (besides myself) and seven laymen, on the motion of the acting arch-deacon:—That this Committee, as representing the Synod of the Diocese of Colombo, while leaving to the Lord Bishop the question of holding special services on the eightieth anniversary of Her Majesty the Queen's birthday, as suggested by the Most Rev. the Metropolitan, respectfully but earnestly deprecate any action intended to imply unity with non-Christian systems in religious worship or prayer."

I omit the remainder of this letter, as it refers to matters that it is not usual to discuss in your Lordship's House. I would observe that the Bishop appears to screen himself behind what he calls a Synod and seven laymen. Was one of them the Colonial Secretary? The *Reis and Rayyet* concludes:

"If this be Christianity, what intolerance and how ill suited to the occasion! It is, according to the insular Bishop, Christian blasphemy even to hope that other nationalities will, simultaneously with Christians, offer prayers for Her Majesty. All other prayers are idolatrous and unacceptable to God, who made the Christian, the Jew, the Mussulman, the Hindu, the Parsi, the Jain, the Buddhist, and everything."

Commenting, on May 28, upon the letter of the Bishop of Colombo, the *Indian Spectator* said:

"We have no right to inquire into what is so entirely an affair between a man and his Maker as his religious beliefs. But the Bishop of Colombo's comments on the Metropolitan's suggestion, which, we are glad to say, has been in a sense abundantly carried out—namely, that the professors of non-Christian faiths in this country should join in offering prayers to the Almighty on the Queen's birthday—seem to us to be so opposed to all that is holy in human nature that we may be pardoned for betraying some curiosity as to the Bishop's notions of the Divine Being. 'We believe,' he writes, 'these acts (the acts of Buddha) to be dishonouring to God, and to be in themselves—whatever may be the ignorance of the worshippers—acts of sin.' For the sake of the Bishop, we earnestly hope he wrote in ignorance of the life and work of him whom he denounces in these terms. The Bishop is much mistaken in thinking that God is dishonoured by the acts of Buddha; his sublime

self-sacrifice, his fearless pursuit of truth, his boundless compassion for the whole universal nature—if these be sins, we had rather sin with Buddha than shine with 'R. S. Colombo.'"

I will conclude by reading to your Lordships the telegram which was sent by the Viceroy at Simla to the Queen-Empress, dated May 24th, 1899:

"The Viceroy begs leave to transmit to your Majesty his respectful sincere congratulations on the happy anniversary of your Majesty's birthday, as well as those of the English officials of your Majesty's service, of the British community in India, and of the vast native population. No such number of human beings has ever before joined in tribute of devotion to a single Sovereign as will be the rejoicing to-day in India over your Majesty's continued welfare and long and blessed reign."

Her Majesty replied to the Viceroy in the following terms:

"I am deeply touched by the loyal expressions and good wishes of yourself, my officials, the British community, and my native subjects in India."

The *Reis and Rayyet*, in an article on this subject, says:

"The Bishop of Colombo would not allow Christians to join with non-Christians in their prayers for Her Majesty. The manner of acceptance of their good wishes by Her Majesty is indeed touching. That truly queenly message to the Viceroy of India is an answer to the narrowness of the Ceylon Bishop, and we hope that prayers sent up by the Hindus, the Mussulmans, the Jews, the Armenians, the Parsis, the Jains, the Sikhs, the Buddhists all have, equally with those of the Christians, reached the Throne of the Most High, the King of Kings."

The feelings of everyone in India have been very much hurt by the conduct of the Bishop of Colombo, and I hope the noble Earl the Under Secretary will not simply smile it away, but will find some words of regret for it.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (The Earl of SELBORNE): My Lords, the attention of the Secretary of State has been called to the letter of the Bishop of Colombo on the subject referred to by the noble Lord, and which has appeared in the Ceylon papers. Her Majesty's Government, however, do not propose to take any action in regard to it.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (DEFECTIVE AND EPILEPTIC CHILDREN) BILL. [Lords.]

SECOND READING.

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (The Duke of DEVONSHIRE): My Lords, although I do not anticipate that any opposition will be offered to this Bill, it may be desirable that I should make a somewhat fuller statement of its objects than that which is contained in the memorandum which I have circulated with the Bill. The details of the Bill are based upon recommendations of the Departmental Committee which was recently appointed to consider the subject. Its object is to give to the local educational authorities power to make provision for a class which is, happily a small, but a most unfortunate class of children, who are termed defective, and who are incapable of receiving any benefit from the ordinary education in elementary schools. This class includes those who are feeble-minded, and by that term is meant not those who are merely dull and difficult to teach, nor, on the other hand, those who are incapable of receiving any instruction in school and who are absolutely imbecile, but a class which is somewhat between these two extremes. It has been found by experience that these children are capable of considerable improvement and of being made useful members of society by means of special classes, which have been in some places provided, so as to enable them to live with their parents and not to be taken away from the surroundings in which it is hoped they will ultimately be able to earn their own living. The Bill follows the lines of the Elementary Education (Blind and Deaf Children) Act, 1893 (56 and 57 Vict. c. 42), and applies, permissibly and *mutatis mutandis*, the provisions of that enactment to defective and epileptic children. In order to make these classes of greater advantage to the children it is necessary to extend the school age to 16, and the Bill provides for this. Classes of this description are exceptionally expensive, and in order to justify the State in giving special grants to help to meet these expenses it is necessary that the Education Department should be authorised to approve the arrangements under which they are con-

ducted. The Department is by this Bill empowered to make special grants, but only upon such conditions as it may direct, and it is proposed that one of these conditions should be that children should have a proper portion of manual instruction, which those conversant with this question believe to be particularly beneficial in their case. Special day classes are the principal means intended to be provided to meet the case of these children, and it is obviously only possible that they should be established in large centres. For isolated cases of defective children in other parts of the country special classes, of course, cannot be provided. There are two alternative ways of dealing with them—one is to send them to board in town near to one of the special classes, and the other is to send them to a residential home for such children, a considerable number of which have already been established by voluntary agencies. The Bill gives facilities to local authorities to adopt one of these methods, and whichever they adopt will be subject to the recommendations of the Educational Department, which require considerable care and supervision in order to be successful. There are certain disadvantages in taking children of this kind away from their own surroundings, where their parents and friends are able to help them, and it depends very much upon the circumstances of individual cases whether it is better to leave them at home or send them away to be taught in one of these special classes. The school authorities are, by the Bill, given discretion in the matter, and the consent of the parents is a necessary condition for the removal of the child. In the case of boarding out the Bill enacts that the district from which a child comes shall bear the cost of his education. As regards the institution, the school authorities may either start residential homes of their own or contribute in support of those already started by voluntary agencies. The Education Department would not look with favour upon very large institutions, and would very strictly limit their numbers. Besides feeble-minded children, the term “defective” includes those who are only prevented by some physical defect from attending an ordinary elementary school, and the Bill gives power to school authorities to provide guides and conveyances for such children. With regard to epileptic children, the Departmental Com-

mittee came to the conclusion that, unless they were also feeble-minded, the epileptic ought not to be taught with the feeble-minded, and that an occasional fit of epilepsy is not a sufficient reason for keeping a child away from ordinary school. There is, however, a small class whose epilepsy is so severe that they are unfit for ordinary schools, and these children, unless they are properly cared for and trained, are likely to grow up to be useless, if not dangerous, to society. For such children proper training is recommended in a small residential home under medical care. The Bill gives power to the school authorities to provide for the children in that way. It also gives to any court of summary jurisdiction the power to compel the parents to send the child to such a home. The case of epileptics, as probably your Lordships are aware, is receiving an increasing amount of attention from many philanthropic bodies, and there is reason to think that a suitable provision of this kind will, to a large extent, be made by voluntary agency. School authorities are enabled by the Bill either to provide these homes themselves or to contribute to the support of those that are provided by other means. The Departmental Committee considered that the special provision prescribed should be provided compulsorily: that is, that the Education Department should have power to compel the local authorities to make universal provision. The Department, however, feel that there would be great difficulty in applying such compulsion, and in some cases the expenses would be too great. Consequently this is an enabling Bill, and not compulsory. In all other respects, I believe, it follows the recommendations of the Departmental Committee, and I beg to move that it be read a second time.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."

LORD REAY: My Lords, I merely rise to give my hearty support to this Bill, and to thank the noble Duke the Lord President of the Council for having introduced it. I hope it will be possible for the Bill to be passed into law this session. The results which have been obtained from the teaching of these children, when trained agency is used, are, I am informed, very satisfactory, and

any money which is spent in this direction will, I believe, yield a very satisfactory return.

EARL EGERTON: My Lords, as this question came before the Departmental Committee on Blind and Deaf Children, of which I had the honour to be Chairman, I should like to be allowed to make a few remarks on this Bill. My noble friend the Lord President of the Council has mentioned that this Bill is founded on the Report of the Departmental Committee, but I think the labours of the private and philanthropic societies which have during the last ten years made investigations into these cases should be in some way recognised. The evidence given before the Committee was based on the results of the examination of 150,000 children. At least 1 per cent. of all the children of school age are mentally or physically unfit to be taught. In London alone there are 8,000 defective and epileptic children, and 42,000 throughout the country. I recently had the honour of presiding over a Conference of Poor Law Guardians on this subject, and a Bill founded on the lines of the Elementary Education (Blind and Deaf Children) Act was recommended as the best means of dealing with these children. I therefore beg to thank the noble Duke for having introduced the Bill, and to express the hope that your Lordships will give it a Second Reading.

*LORD KINNAIRD: My Lords, on behalf of a number of voluntary institutions I beg to thank the noble Duke for having brought forward this Bill this session. Many of the voluntary institutions would be only too ready to make arrangements to take in the children for whom the Bill will provide if they receive some financial help, and I think the experience of the Continent shows that many epileptic children, if taken young and dealt with properly, can be made useful members of society, whereas they would, if neglected, become complete idiots. I am connected with an institution in France where the results are most satisfactory and many epileptics have been permanently benefited by scientific and kind treatment, and I sincerely welcome this Bill.

On Question, agreed to.

Bill read 2^a (according to Order), and committed to a Committee of the whole House on Monday next.

FINE OR IMPRISONMENT (SCOTLAND AND IRELAND) BILL.

House in Committee (according to Order): Bill reported without amendment; and re-committed to the Standing Committee.

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes past Six of the clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven of the clock

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 23rd June 1899.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS. [Lords.]

(No Standing Orders not previously inquired into applicable.)

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders not previously inquired into are applicable, viz.:

BROOKE'S PARK (LONDONDERRY) BILL. [Lords.]

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

CARDIFF RAILWAY BILL.

RHONDDA URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL BILL.

Lords Amendments considered, and agreed to.

HASTINGS AND ST. LEONARDS GAS BILL. [Lords.]

Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

BARTON-ON-SEA WATER BILL. [Lords.]

As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

DERWENT VALLEY WATER (CONSOLIDATED) BILL.

As amended, considered.

Ordered, That Standing Orders 223 and 243 be suspended, and that the Bill be now read the third time.—(*Dr. Farquharson.*)

Queen's Consent signified.—Bill read the third time accordingly, and passed.

LANARKSHIRE [MIDDLE WARD DISTRICT] WATER BILL. [Lords.]

As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL BILL.

Ordered, That, in the case of the Worcestershire County Council Bill, Standing Orders 84, 214, 215, and 239 be suspended, and that the Bill be now taken into consideration provided amended prints shall have been previously deposited.—(*Dr. Farquharson.*)

Bill, as amended, considered accordingly.

Ordered, That Standing Orders 223 and 243 be suspended, and that the Bill be now read the third time.—(*Dr. Farquharson.*)

Bill read the third time accordingly and passed.

IONIAN BANK BILL.

Ordered, That in the case of the Ionian Bank Bill, Standing Orders 84, 214, 215, and 239 be suspended, and that the Bill be now taken into consideration provided amended prints shall have been previously deposited.—(*Dr. Farquharson.*)

Bill, as amended, considered accordingly.

Ordered, That Standing Orders 223 and 243 be suspended, and that the Bill be now read the third time.—(*Dr. Farquharson.*)

Bill read the third time accordingly, and passed.

NEW TITLE.

London, Walthamstow, and Epping Forest Railway Bill changed from "London, Walthamstow, and Epping Forest Railway (No. 2) Bill."

Ordered, That, in the case of the London, Walthamstow, and Epping Forest Railway Bill, Standing Orders 84, 214,

215, and 239 be suspended, and that the Bill be now taken into consideration, provided amended prints shall have been previously deposited.—(*Dr. Farquharson.*)

Bill, as amended, considered accordingly.

Ordered, That Standing Orders 223 and 243 be suspended, and that the Bill be now read the third time.—(*Dr. Farquharson.*)

Bill read the third time accordingly, and passed.

HARROW AND UXBRIDGE RAILWAY BILL.

Ordered, That, in the case of the Harrow and Uxbridge Railway Bill, Standing Orders 84, 214, 215, and 239 be suspended, and that the Bill be now taken into consideration provided amended prints shall have been previously deposited.—(*Dr. Farquharson.*)

Bill, as amended, considered accordingly.

Ordered, That Standing Orders 223 and 243 be suspended, and that the Bill be now read the third time.—(*Dr. Farquharson.*)

Bill read the third time accordingly, and passed.

KINGSCOURT, KEADY, AND ARMAGH RAILWAY BILL. (By Order.)

MOTION FOR RE-COMMITTAL.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N): Sir, the motion I have the honour to make is an unusual one, and I desire further to say at the outset that, it being an unusual one, I have no intention whatever of dividing the House upon it. I simply bring it forward by way of making an appeal for a further opportunity of consideration being given to it. I feel very much upon this question, and for this reason, that under the system of Select Committees in this House the rules of procedure are admittedly of a very oppressive and difficult kind in dealing with Irish business. If you have a Bill rejected by this House it is final, but if passed by the House the opponents have a further opportunity of opposing it in the House of Lords. Therefore, it is specially hard upon promoters if, for any reason whatever, the Committee

consider that a case has not been made out for the Bill, it is thrown out for the whole year, and the promoters have no opportunity of coming again to the House. It is very seldom that the proposal to make a railway in Ireland comes before this House. There has not been for thirty years a Bill to construct a railway, with one exception, unless in the hands of the State. Therefore, when private individuals come forward and propose to lay out half a million of money to construct a line forty miles in length I respectfully say that the proposal is entitled to the generous consideration of the House. Far be it from me to even hint an objection to the composition of the Committee or to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Clitheroe Division who presided over the proceedings. We owe too much to the right hon. Gentleman in connection with the action he took last year as president of the Hybrid Committee on the Rosslare scheme to allow any imputation of unfairness on his general line of action in this matter. I am quite sure that he will not conceive for a moment that in making this motion I am engaged in making any reflection upon him in his character as President of the Committee. On the contrary, if I could imagine that this motion in the slightest degree reflected upon him, I would not make it. Whatever view the right hon. Gentleman takes of the motion, it is not my intention to go to a Division. In the first instance, it will be remembered that, however important a Committee of this House may be in dealing with Irish matters, there are no Irish Members upon it. Whatever be the result of this motion, it must lead us in future years to insist that Irish business shall be so conducted that some infusion of an Irish representative character shall take place in regard to it. We came before the right hon. Gentleman, and he gave a very patient consideration to our case; but before I deal with that, let me state the Irish feeling in regard to the Bill. Forty-five local bodies have declared in favour of this measure, and no single Irish body have declared against it. Trinity College, which owns land in the district—the Provost, Dr. Salmon, and the governing body of Dublin University, have declared themselves in favour of it. My hon. friend the senior Member for Trinity College, if he could have been present in his place,

would have supported the motion, and his colleague in the representation of the University has already signed the petition in its favour. Indeed, I may say that more than half the Irish representatives have presented a petition to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Lancashire, asking that an opportunity may be given for the reconsideration of the Bill. I feel that the right hon. Gentleman has cast upon him a great responsibility, and I am quite sure that if, in his wisdom, he chooses to assent to our request it would be a very great favour. However strongly he may feel that he was right in connection with his action, I think he must see that there is something to be said on the other side when so large a body of Irishmen petition in regard to it, and when the unanimous voice of the local authorities and the public appeals to him for a reconsideration of the case. Armagh, through which this railway would partially run, is a county which is not entirely National in its character. It is represented in this House by two Conservatives and one Nationalist, and when I say that all three, the County Council, three-fourths of which are Conservatives, and all the local bodies are in favour of it, then I think there is a very strong case for reconsideration. The line would run through the neighbouring county of Meath, all of which is Nationalist, and the Members and local bodies support the Bill. Then, in the adjacent counties of Monaghan and Cavan the entire local bodies support the appeal for reconsideration. Well, I intervene in the matter, not only because my name is on the back of the Bill, but because I have been appealed to by the local bodies to take charge of the motion. I think that as this appeal to the House is supported by the whole weight of the local authorities, it requires very strong arguments indeed to maintain that the motion should not be entertained. There are precedents for this motion. One was established by the Duke of Westminster in a railway case, and there was another case where a similar motion was successful. Now, it may be asked, on what ground was this Bill rejected, and on what grounds do I ask for its reconsideration? Sir, as I understand, the Committee gave no reasons, and do not now give reasons, for the rejection of the measure. As I understand, they decide *in camera*, and simply announce to the public that the preamble

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is passed or is not passed; and of course it is left, more or less, to private speculation to arrive at the grounds for the rejection. Looking to the board of directors, it appears to me to be a very solid board of very solid gentlemen. The High Sheriff of the County of Armagh, Mr. Lonsdale, a Conservative gentleman, was one of the directors; Sir Benjamin Baker, the eminent engineer, whose work on the Forth Bridge and in Egypt everyone is acquainted with, was another; Mr. Charles M. Holland, connected with Brunner, Mond, and Co., was another. Lord Greville, an Irish peer, was another; and Mr. Rose, of Birmingham, another. It may be said that this line could be constructed by the promoters with a view to sell it either to the Midland Railway or to the Great Northern Railway. On that point I would say that as far back as 1837—sixty years ago—this line was recommended by a Royal Commission to be made, and therefore I think that any promoter, be he who he may, who takes it up now, sixty years after, and tries to do the work, ought to be encouraged. You cannot suppose that promoters of railways are merely benevolent persons who wish to spend their time and money for the public benefit. That would be an absurdity. There is an element of public benefit and private gain in every railway speculation. Both motives and interests are always there, and I see no ground for the suggestion that the individual promoters connected with this scheme are actuated by other than the ordinary motives. The second objection is, that if these promoters get hold of the Bill, instead of making the line, they would sell it to the Great Northern Railway Company or the Midland Railway Company. As far as I understand, the Great Northern and Midland Companies have entered into a mutual arrangement by which neither would interfere with the other's sphere of influence or invade each other's territory. But is this line to be regarded as a no-man's line, and is it to be boycotted by both companies, and is it never to be made by reason of this joint agreement? If that be so, then there is surely the greater reason why the private promoter should be encouraged to try and break up this monopoly. If the promoters obtain an Act, I understand that they cannot sell that Act either to the Midland or Great Northern Company without coming

Parliament for sanction; so that both Parliament and either company would have check upon the sale or barter of the line. Well, then, it might be said that the traffic would not warrant the construction of the line. Now, this line is divisible into two parts—the fat end and the lean end. The fat end is supposed to be from Armagh to Keady, and the lean end from Armagh to Kingscourt. I understand that an undertaking has been given from the Great Northern Railway that they themselves will come to Parliament next year and obtain Parliamentary powers to construct the fat end of the line. In other words, the lean end of the line is never to be made. Well, all I can say is, that if the Great Northern Company come to Parliament next year with that scheme, I shall meet it with the most strenuous opposition. We have gone on our knees to the Great Northern Railway Company again and again; our people, both Catholic and Protestant, have crawled to the company and asked them to make this line; and now, because the line has, to some extent, been supported by this Committee, and the conduct of the Great Northern in the past has been exposed, they, in order to suit their through line, say, “We will make this fat end of the line and thereby kill the other scheme.” That is not a position which Parliament ought to allow this railway company to take up. While railway companies have rights, they have also obligations. I respectfully say that whoever makes this line, it should be made as a whole. And now we come to the case that was made for reconsideration. It is very remarkable, in connection with the shifts and strategies of the opponents of this line, that I should have received a telegram in Dublin the day before yesterday. I am very glad indeed that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Clitheroe Division is in his place to-day, and I regret that he was debarred by illness from being present last week when I proposed to make this motion. In my innocence I did not know anything whatever of the condition of the right hon. Gentleman except from a private note which I received from him; but on Wednesday last I received the following telegram:

“Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth too ill to come to the House. Will you be further considerate to him and postpone your motion

for re-committal of the Bill until after 4th July? (Signed) DYSON, 9, Great George Street, Westminster.”

I made inquiry, and found that this was the firm of solicitors for the Great Northern Railway, the opponents of the Bill! By this trick of the Great Northern Company, under the pretence of solicitude for the health of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Clitheroe Division I was to be prevented from coming over from Dublin to move my motion, and therefore I would have been too late to get a chance of the Bill being reconsidered this year. That is a specimen of the tricks of the Great Northern Company of which we have had to complain on every matter connected with this line. I would say, if there was no other ground than that telegram, the opponents of this Bill are to be condemned as a set of tricksters. Well, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman who presided over this Committee may ask upon what point it is that we seek the reconsideration of the Bill. What the promoters of the Bill say is that they made a mistake in considering that the Committee was with them. They say that on the question of traffic, which is stated to be the ostensible reason for objection, when the Royal Commission recommended the making of this line 60 years ago, they conceived that, to some extent, it was unnecessary for them to go closely into that question. One of the opponents of the Bill was the Midland Railway Company, and I find, on looking at the evidence, that when the promoters of the Bill sought to cross-examine the managers of the Midland Railway Company on the question of traffic, they were stopped by the Chairman. On page 156, when Mr. Tatlow, manager of the Midland, was about to be examined as to traffic, Mr. Blennerhassett was apparently stopped on the objection of another set of opponents. For instance, at Question 2173, Mr. Pember said:

“An opponent has no right to give evidence in favour of the Bill—

“The Chairman: Certainly not.

“Mr. Blennerhassett: I am not going to call any evidence in favour of the Bill; you are quite mistaken.

“The Chairman: Mr. Pember is, of course, right in objecting to that. I think you must be careful to avoid that. Keep yourself strictly to the question of this proposal of running powers, and your objection to it.”

In other words, an indication was given by the Chairman—and I respectfully say

that that was the impression made on the minds of the supporters of the Bill—that they had no right to examine the Midland manager on the question of traffic. It may have been right or it may have been wrong, but I respectfully say that it would have been desirable if the Midland manager had been examined on that point.

SIR U. KAY - SHUTTLEWORTH (Lancashire, Clitheroe): The objection was raised because the impression was that he was going into evidence arising in support of the Bill, whereas, he appeared as an opponent. The witness was allowed to proceed.

MR. T. M. HEALY: All I can say is that the impression left on the mind of the promoters was not the same as that left on the mind of the right hon. Gentleman. Well, the right hon. Gentleman made his recommendation, and on page 180 he says:

"The Committee have decided that the preamble is not proved, but in doing so they take note of the assurance given on behalf of the Great Northern Railway Company, that a railway will be constructed from Armagh to Keady."

It appears to me that if an alternative line is practically taken note of and sanctioned, a cross-examination should have been allowed. Both on the ground of the mistake made by the promoters, and of the general anxiety and feeling of the district, I think this is a proper scheme for re-consideration, and I hope that the right hon. Gentleman will see his way to accept the motion.

MR. ARCHDALE (Fermanagh, N.): I do not often agree with my hon. friend opposite, but in this matter I am bound to do so, as the whole of the inhabitants of the district are in favour of the re-committal of the Bill and of there being a further hearing. I second the motion for the re-committal.

Motion made and question proposed,

"That the Kingscourt, Keady, and Armagh Railway Bill be re-committed to the former Committee.—(*Mr. T. M. Healy.*)

THE SOLICITOR - GENERAL FOR IRELAND (**MR. DUNBAR BARTON**, Armagh, Mid): Speaking, not as a member of the Irish Government, but as the re-

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representative of a constituency which contains the towns of Armagh and Keady, I support the motion. There are two rival lines put forward at present for this district, and there are influential partisans of both schemes. I have not the materials to decide between the relative merits of these two lines, and I think that the safest guidance under the circumstances is the judgment of an independent Committee of this House. Now, Sir, in this case there has been, I need not say, an absolutely fair inquiry; but there are certainly a large number of people in my constituency who think that in the evidence justice was not done to the traffic facilities, traffic capabilities, and traffic prospects of the scheme. Sir, I think it is most desirable, speaking as a representative of the district, that there should be no feeling that before this matter is finally disposed of something was left unsubmitted to the Committee which ought to have been submitted to them. I understand that the further consideration of this Bill would not occupy more than a day, and I also understand that the promoters are willing to make any reasonable undertaking to provide for the costs of the opponents necessitated by such reconsideration. I therefore suggest to the right hon. Gentleman, who is the Chairman, whether he cannot see his way to give that further consideration to the Bill. There could not have been a better Committee, or one more representative of both sides of the House, and there could not be a more respected or more experienced Chairman than the right hon. Gentleman. I sincerely trust, having regard to all the circumstances, the right hon. Gentleman will see his way to accept the suggestion made.

MR. DALY (Monaghan, S.): As representing a very large district interested in this railway, I wish to add my voice to that of hon. Members in asking that the Bill should be re-committed. At a representative meeting at Carrickmacross a unanimous desire was expressed that the Bill should be re-committed, and a resolution was passed to the effect that the people of the district were very much disappointed that the Bill was not passed by the Committee. It would take a man living in the district to understand how necessary this Bill is. As coming from the district, my belief is that the Bill is of

the greatest importance as affecting a district of some 20 miles, and that importance is recognised by the Irish people generally, by benches of magistrates, district councils, boards of guardians, and other bodies, all of whom are of opinion that the Bill is very much wanted and would prove of the greatest service to this district. It having come to my notice some time ago that the Midland Railway Company were thinking of constructing a line to Carrickmacross, an understanding was arrived at, most unfortunately for the district, between the Great Northern and the Midland, the result of which will be to hit very hard the people in the district, for the arrangement was that there should be no competition in future between two lines of railway, and the result of that, of course, is that we shall have to pay any rate that the Great Northern Railway Company may demand. Sir, I will read the resolution which was passed by the Carrickmacross District Council last Tuesday :

“ That this Council is greatly surprised at the action of the Parliamentary Committee in throwing out the Bill for the Kingscourt to Keady line of railway, and they cannot see how the Committee could possibly come to the decision they arrived at, taking into account how badly this line is needed for the purpose of opening up the country through which it is proposed to build it, and that we call on Mr. Daly, our representative in Parliament, to use his influence in having the matter reconsidered. This Council think that the throwing out of this necessary Bill is another proof of the necessity of having matters of this kind, which are of such importance to Ireland, considered in Dublin, and by Irishmen.”

I hope, before long, matters of this kind will be considered by Irishmen, and not by people who do not understand the necessities of Ireland. The Committee went fully into the subject, but there was a great deal too much weight placed upon the evidence of the traffic-manager of the Great Northern Railway Company, and that in itself is a very strong reason why this Bill should be re-committed. Carrickmacross is 56 miles from Dublin by the new line, and no changes would have to be made, while on the present route the distance is 70 miles, and there is the trouble and danger of three changes. Castleblaney, to which is being connected Carrickmacross, and Kingscourt are both important towns. At present, if a person wishes to go to the market at Castleblaney, he has to leave Carrickmacross at five minutes to eight in the

morning, and does not reach Castleblaney until 18 minutes past ten—two and a half hours to reach a town nine miles away ; while by the new line the distance would be covered in 10 or 12 minutes. All Members from Ireland, both Conservative and Nationalist, are in favour of the Bill, and I respectfully ask that it may be re-committed.

SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH : An appeal has been made to me in a memorial signed by a large number of the Irish Members, and supported by the Solicitor-General opposite, and by another hon. Member on that side of the House, to consider whether the Committee would not sit again, after reporting to this House that the preamble of this Bill was not proved, and consider the matter afresh. Being desirous of doing full justice, I have listened carefully—but without success—for any suggestion of new facts or of any mis-statements made before the Committee, by which they might have been misled. It is without precedent that a Committee should be called upon by this House to sit again after reporting the preamble of a Bill not proved, except under such circumstances as I have suggested, and circumstances recognised by the Committee itself as being of a character requiring further consideration. It was stated that this line was recommended by a Royal Commission 60 years ago, but the House was not informed that that was before the present railway system of Ireland in that part of the country existed, and before the line which now connects Belfast and Dublin had been built. It might have been good to run a line as suggested by this Bill, but another route was chosen, and this is a proposal to construct another line, 36 miles long, parallel with the other, and only about 10 miles to the west of it. I may say at once that the Committee, if they were convinced that they had not had all the facts before them, would not have any feelings of *amour propre* or anything of the kind ; but I would rather leave it to the authorities of the House to consider whether, when a Bill has been thoroughly considered and no new facts brought forward, a Committee should be called upon to sit again, and the parties put to the trouble and expense of coming before the same Committee again to lay before them the same set of facts as before. We stopped no relevant evidence. The point which has been referred to was a

purely technical point, and when the technical point had been decided the witness was allowed to go on and give the evidence he wished to give. The promoters were represented by five of the leading counsel at the Parliamentary Bar—four Queen's Counsel and one junior—but their case was, throughout, a weak one, and the weakness was shown to be fatal when the evidence of the opponents—the Great Northern Railway—was laid before the Committee. This railway was to connect two systems of railways, the Great Northern to the north of Armagh, and the Midland and Great Western south of Kingscourt. In the opinion of many of the witnesses the northern part of the line was really needed, but it was in the wrong place, as it was on the high-level, while what is wanted in that district is a low-level railway passing from Armagh to Keady, which would have supplied places that have no railway at all. As the outcome of the proceedings before the Committee, I have in my hand a formal promise, on behalf of the Great Northern Railway Company, that a Bill to construct such a line shall be promoted in the next session of Parliament.

MR. T. M. HEALY: You will never get it.

SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: If they do not get it, it will be because of opposition that may be brought against it. Keady will be served by the railway to be promoted next session. Then comes the question of the rest of the country south of Keady. The line proposed in this Bill will only pass through two places—Castleblaney, with 1,721 inhabitants, and Carrickmacross with 1,175; and besides those two places there is on the route no hamlet, no village, no factory, and no prospect of any mineral traffic. Kingscourt, at the southern end of the line, and these other two places, already have railway stations, while Castleblaney and Carrickmacross have immediate communication with the coast. Keady is the only place on the whole route which has not railway facilities. As to the nature of the country through which the line will pass, from Keady to Castleblaney is a very poor agricultural part.

MR. DALY: May I ask upon what grounds the right hon. Gentleman makes the statement that this is a poor country?

Sir U. Kay-Shuttleworth.

SIR U. KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH: That was the evidence given before the Committee, and Members who are more acquainted with that part of Ireland than I am will be able to judge whether or not it is correct. The Committee came to the conclusion that there was no prospect of a financial return on the capital which was proposed to be expended, and that this line would take away from the chance of the promotion or completion of a better line from Armagh to Keady, which would serve the latter. Well, Sir, the Committee saw that the only chance of raising the traffic and making a profit would lie in the geographical position of this line between these two great systems of railway. The line could not have made a profit itself, but it would be possible for the promoters of the line to approach one or other of the great companies and sell the line. The Committee were of opinion that that would be the ultimate use to which the line would be put, and they thought that that was not a thing which the Committee would accept or sanction. They thought it was sometimes beneficial for a railway contractor to construct a line, provided always he could show that there would be a financial return, but in this case there could be no financial return unless by a sale to another company; and, under all the circumstances, the Committee were unanimous in coming to the conclusion that this was not a Bill which they could properly pass, and they consequently came to the conclusion that the preamble was not proved; and I hope their decision will receive the support of this House.

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith): I think that the House would feel that the circumstances would have to be very exceptional before it would reverse the decision of the Committee. If we were to be called upon to reconsider all the evidence and the arguments urged on Private Bills, our work would be endless. On the other hand, the House will naturally desire to preserve its full authority over the decisions of the Committees, and I think the House must concede that circumstances might exist under which the House would send a Bill back to the Committee, though they had not passed the preamble. That, however, would only be done upon the ground that there had been a mis-

carriage of justice, and I think that the hon. Member for Clitheroe will vouch that no miscarriage of justice has occurred in this case. He, as the Chairman of the Committee, is as well qualified as any man in this House to direct the consideration of a Committee, and the knowledge he has acquired in Irish matters is a guarantee that he gives attention to all the arguments put forward. All the promoters can allege is that some evidence which the promoters had was not placed before the Committee, but they were assisted by able counsel, and I think there can be very little doubt that they put their best evidence in first. If that did not convince the Committee, I doubt whether any further evidence which the promoters could have brought would be able to throw any light in that direction. Under the circumstances, it seems to me that the House would be taking a most unusual course, and one which I would venture to advise it not to adopt, against the views of the Chairman, in sending this Bill back to the Committee.

MR. MURNAGHAN (Tyrone, Mid): I quite recognise the strength of the argument of the right hon. Gentleman, but I also recognise that there is a unanimous opinion in Ireland that this matter should be reconsidered. A claim has been made that certain evidence which was not before the Committee could now be introduced. As that claim comes from Irish Members on both sides of the House, I submit that it is a case in which the House might give way. It comes from persons acquainted with the needs of the district, and who know that unless something is done the Great Western Railway of Ireland will swallow up everything. I hope that the time is not far off when the existing management of these railways will be changed, and facilities will be given to the inhabitants of this district to send their produce to the great markets of the world on fair and reasonable terms. No less than nine representative bodies of the district are in favour of this Bill, and I contend that the very fact that the representatives of Fermanagh, Armagh, and Tyrone are sent up to this House to advocate the recommitment of this Bill shows that the claim of the district is a strong one.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Perhaps I may give one reason which the right hon. Member

for Clitheroe did not give for the rejection of this Bill, which he now opposes the recommitment of. It only affects a small railway in a small district, but the right hon. Gentleman is such a staunch Home Ruler that he rejects this as an instance of the incompetency of his Party to deal with Irish affairs. I beg to withdraw the motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 4) BILL.

Read the third time, and passed.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 14) BILL. (By Order.)

PROPOSED INSTRUCTION.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon, &c.): The motion which stands in my name has reference to the Provisional Order which was discussed a few days ago. The Secretary to the Local Government Board seemed rather to challenge the opponents of the Order to appear before the Committee and oppose it. There is a strong opinion in Rhyl that it ought to be fought, but, unfortunately, there seems some doubt as to their *locus standi*. I have consulted some authorities on the point, and find that the residents of Rhyl cannot appear to oppose a Provisional Order unless their property is affected. That is why I make this motion, because there are other things besides property to be considered—there is freedom of speech; and I do not think it is too much to ask the House of Commons to give to this Council, which represents the Nonconformists of the town and the Evangelical party of Rhyl, an opportunity to appear before the Committee to prove their case. Of course a local inquiry was held first of all, but it was conducted by a Commissioner of the Local Government Board, and he came to a conclusion which was adverse to the Council; but this, after all, is the highest tribunal, and when there is a suggestion that there is a Provisional Order passing this House which restricts the liberty of the subject, I think every opportunity ought to be afforded to those interested to present their case to the House. I am afraid if the Bill is sent back to the Committee the progress of

the Provisional Order will be delayed, and it will not be able to pass the House of Lords this session. It is obviously impossible for this Bill to go to the House of Lords on Tuesday next, for the simple reason that we must challenge it if it goes through in its present form, for I must move the insertion of the compromise which was arrived at between the parties, and which was afterwards repudiated by the Rural Council. Therefore it is obvious that it is impossible this Bill can go through, and consequently it cannot be a question of time. The House of Lords is constantly asked to suspend its Standing Orders in order to allow Bills which arrive there late to pass through during the session. There is nothing at all difficult about it, and I am sure that my hon. friend will see that my request is a perfectly fair one. We are simply asking for an opportunity for these gentlemen to appear before a Committee of the House of Commons to present their case. If there be no case, the Committee can pass the Bill and leave the expenses to be paid by the opponents. May I put it to the House in this way—that we are simply asking the same freedom for the Free Church at Rhyl as is already accorded at Brighton and elsewhere. What is good enough for Brighton should be good enough for the Urban District Council at Rhyl. At Brighton meetings are held in the evening on the foreshore. The hon. Member has suggested that there would be no opposition to these meetings being held away from the foreshore, but it is absurd to make suggestions of that kind. There are portions of the foreshore where, if these meetings were relegated to those parts, they might as well not be held at all. At Brighton these meetings are held right in the thick of the crowd. In Hyde Park the meetings are held just at the spot where the crowd is passing backwards and forwards. The question of the meetings in Hyde Park has been discussed in the House time after time. What I am objecting to is that this authority desire to be relieved from any Parliamentary control, and simply wish to frame these bye-laws without any opportunity for discussing them in Parliament at all. The bye-laws are made by the authorities connected with Hyde Park, and if they relegate these meetings in Hyde Park to some spot where the crowd do not congregate

Mr. Lloyd-George.

we can discuss it on the Estimate; but if this is done at Rhyl there is no remedy, and that is why I am bringing up this matter and appealing to the House of Commons. This is the only chance which the ratepayers of Rhyl have of presenting their case to the House. At Rhyl the foreshore is their Hyde Park, and it is the only open space where these meetings can be held, and these bye-laws are being framed so as practically to prohibit these meetings. That is the suggestion of the hon. Member for West Ham—and it is rather significant that the supporters of this proposal have had to go outside Wales in order to get an advocate for their scheme. If these meetings are held outside the purview of the crowd in any particular district, the result will be that all these temperance and evangelical meetings might as well not be held at all. The hon. Gentleman has given no indication of what his view is with regard to these bye-laws. If it is intended that the meetings are to be held on the western side of the pier, they might as well be prohibited altogether. [AN HON. MEMBER: "Why?"] Because the crowd does not pass that way. I know that in the opinion of my hon. friend the Member for King's Lynn these people should be sent somewhere in the wilderness to preach; but, fortunately, that is not the principle which has been adopted in this country. In England hitherto we have gone upon the principle of allowing everybody to blow off steam. Why not let them address the crowd if they like? If people do not wish to listen to these orators, they need not go there. There is a very wide stretch of sand—there are miles of it—and if the Ritualists do not wish to listen to the Evangelical clergymen advancing their doctrines, there is no reason why they should. It is suggested that the meetings should not be held within 30 feet of the esplanade, but they hold these meetings at Brighton right on the esplanade, and I have never heard any complaints by the Brighton Council that anybody's ears have been offended by anything which has been said there. All we want is the same freedom in Rhyl as has been accorded in London, in Blackpool, in Brighton, and, I believe, in Ramsgate. I think the request I make is a perfectly reasonable one, and it is that an opportunity should be given to the Rhyl Free Church Council to hold these meetings.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, Tyrone, S.): The Free Church Council do not represent the town of Rhyl.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I do not claim that the Free Church Council does represent Rhyl. My hon. friend practically argues that simply because they are in a minority they ought to be "gagged." He came down to a meeting in my constituency where his views were in a minority, but we did not attempt to "gag" him; and I want him to give the same freedom to the minority in Rhyl as was accorded to him when he came to Wales. I want an opportunity for the minority in the town of Rhyl to present their views before the House of Commons.

MR. J. H. ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg leave to second this motion. I think it is a very reasonable request to make, that the representatives of the Rhyl Free Church Council should have an opportunity of laying their views before a Committee of this House.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee to whom the Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 14) Bill is committed, to take the evidence tendered by or on behalf of residents in the district of Rhyl upon the question of the powers proposed by the Bill to be given to the Rhyl District Council to make bye-laws in respect of the foreshore and sands."—(*Mr. Lloyd-George.*)

***MR. T. W. RUSSELL**: I venture to submit that this proposal is not a departure which the House ought to make, for by a majority of close upon 100 the House has already decided that this Provisional Order Bill should take the usual course, and that it should not go to the Police and Sanitary Committee. That was decided by a majority of close upon 100. Now, what does my hon. friend ask us to do? He asks the House to adopt a Resolution which is wrong as a matter of form, because the Committee to which this Bill must go is the Unopposed Bill Committee, and before that Committee not a single witness can be heard. That is an absolute fact, and so far as the form of the Resolution goes, I say that not one single witness can be examined, because it is a Committee for Unopposed Bills.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I beg the hon. Member's pardon, but that cannot be the

case, because in this Resolution I propose to petition against the Bill.

***MR. T. W. RUSSELL**: The motion says:

"That it be an Instruction to the Committee to whom the Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 14) Bill is committed to take the evidence tendered by or on behalf of residents in the district of Rhyl."

Now, the Committee to which this Bill must be committed is the Unopposed Bill Committee, and before that Committee no evidence can be taken. Let us see what has taken place. My hon. friend has admitted that there has been a local inquiry at Rhyl, where all parties were fairly and fully heard. He does not cast any imputation upon the inquiry which was held at Rhyl. It was a free and full inquiry, and the Free Church Council was heard at length before the Inspector to the Local Government Board. His report was carefully considered, and the result of it is this Provisional Order Bill. I particularly desire to call the hon. Member's attention to the fact that this Bill was read a first time on the 19th of May, and if any person in Rhyl desired to oppose it in the meantime they had their opportunity. It is a fact that no ratepayer in Rhyl can oppose it, because they are bound by the seal of the District Council. Incasiduly qualified persons desired to oppose they had a right to petition, but they have now lost their opportunity. This Bill has to go to the other House, and there all the rights of opposing it are intact. They can be heard before a Committee of the other House, and I understand that the procedure of the other House is a little more elastic than the procedure in this House. Whatever rights they have they have allowed to go by default here, and they must now go to the other House. Just consider what will happen if my hon. friend succeeds. He is a pretty fair tactician: that I admit. He knows perfectly well what will occur if he carries his motion. This Bill should be in the House of Lords on Tuesday next. He says the House of Lords may suspend their Standing Orders; but I may tell the House, in regard to these Provisional Order Bills, that the House of Lords has absolutely refused to suspend Standing Orders unless the Local Government Board certifies that a question of public health is involved. In a matter of this kind I am certain the Bill runs very great risk in-

deed. This is not a Bill containing one Order alone—it not merely affects Rhyl, but it also affects Ramsgate and Reading; and are their interests to be imperilled because of the dispute between the Free Church Council and the Rhyl Urban District Council? I am not going here to argue the question of the foreshore. Nobody desires to prohibit free speech there or anywhere else. All that the Provisional Order does is to confer power on the Rhyl Council—a body largely composed of Nonconformists—to regulate speaking on the sands and foreshore. The Council wrote to the Local Government Board as late as the 15th of this month, begging us to push this Bill through so that they may be authorised by bye-law, not to prohibit free speech, but to regulate the speaking on the foreshore. There is no want of sympathy on the part of the Local Government Board. But other people have rights as well as those who desire to speak on the sands. The people of Rhyl have rights, and they have determined to ask for these bye-laws. I do not think the House ought to refuse them. After all, those who oppose the Bill have their rights intact in the other House, and I therefore hold that we should allow the Bill to go to the Lords' Committee, there to be dealt with in the ordinary way.

*MR. McKENNA (Monmouth, N.): The hon. Gentleman, no doubt unwittingly, has misquoted the facts of this case. His argument was directed to the general law of the country, enabling local authorities to make bye-laws. But what is suggested in this particular place is that there should be an alteration of the general law, and I have to submit to the House considerations for not allowing it, unless special circumstances are shown to exist. My hon. friend has not been discussing the merits of the general law; he asks that a Committee of this House should be informed what are the special circumstances in Rhyl which justify giving these strong and exceptional powers to its Council. If the hon. Gentleman's argument has any force, why does he not introduce a Bill giving these powers to all councils? No doubt to a majority of the hon. Members present public speaking in the streets or on the sea shore is very disagreeable; no doubt speeches on philosophical and religious topics, delivered in raucous tones, interfere with the

cultivated leisure of the upper classes; but that is no reason why we should put a stop to the cheap amusement of the lower classes. I appeal to hon. Members on both sides of the House to allow this question to be judged on its merits, and not by a hasty vote deprive the poorer classes of the visitors to Rhyl of their one inexpensive amusement. I am quite sure that if a Committee of this House hears the evidence, it will come to the same conclusion as the Police and Sanitary Committee have done in similar cases during the last three or four years. They will act as the Local Government Board and the Home Secretary have advised in numerous other cases, and allow reasonable freedom of speech on the sands; and if the urban authority is allowed any liberty to make bye-laws it will be strictly on the evidence, and the power will be confined to particular parts of the sea shore, so as not to deprive those in the lower ranks of life of the liberty which they now enjoy.

*MR. JAMES LOWTHER (Kent, Thanet): The hon. member who brought forward this motion is, I believe, in favour of Home Rule for Wales, and in fact I imagine of Home Rule all round, but would it not be a setting our faces entirely against the most elementary principles of local self-government if we deny to the elected representatives of a locality a right which has been conceded to almost every applicant who has come to Parliament? When the Parks Regulation Bill was introduced in this House in the Parliament of 1868, I, as a member of the Select Committee, moved the insertion of the words:

"That no person shall deliver, or invite any person to deliver, any public address in a park, except in accordance with the rules of park."

That clause, although at first opposed, was eventually embodied in the Bill and unanimously adopted by the House. The hon. Member has told us we have the power to raise this question on the Estimates every year; but I would point out that, although hon. Members are often hard set to find topics for discussion on the Estimates, this subject has never once been mentioned. In many of the Royal parks speaking is absolutely forbidden, while in others it is subject to regulations, and it must be remembered that the

Mr. T. W. Russell.

London County Council exercises its powers in this respect with very great rigour, and quite rightly so, in the open spaces under their control, and I, for one, cannot see why a freely elected representative body such as the Rhyl Urban District Council should not have power to make bye-laws regulating the proceedings on the foreshore. This House cannot undertake any inquiry into the circumstances of each particular locality. London already possesses the rights which are claimed under this Bill, and I certainly think that Rhyl, in common with other towns in the United Kingdom, should be granted the right to make reasonable regulations for the control of open spaces.

MR. COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin): I am afraid we are in some danger of coming to a hasty decision on this matter. The question we have to consider is whether it shall be open to certain persons who object to the Order drawn up to go before a Committee of the House and oppose its terms, either *in toto*, or have it amended so that the powers conferred on the Rhyl Council shall be subject to some restrictions; that is the question, and not whether the Rhyl Council shall have a voice in regulating the sands there. My right hon. friend says that if we do that we shall strike at the very root of self-government; but my right hon. friend will remember that what is proposed is in absolute accordance with the principle of Parliament, which provided that power was to be given to freely elected representatives to lay down regulations such as are now obtained by a Provisional Order; but Parliament found it necessary to interfere with the power so given, and it was taken away. Let us have no venom against irregular religious exercises. They, no doubt, influence vast multitudes of our countrymen, and we should not lay down the principle that Members of this House are not to be allowed to consider on what terms they should be regulated. I appeal to the House to let this matter go to a Committee of four. We have been engaged this session in legislation affecting Scottish Private Bill legislation, and under the scheme of that Bill, as it now stands, we are to have local inquiries, if possible an inquiry by Members of Parliament; but it has been carefully preserved that if the result of that inquiry does not give satis-

faction, it can be reconsidered in the House. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Local Government Board says what is now asked for cannot be done, that we have lost our opportunity, that we cannot reopen an Unopposed Bill, and all that kind of thing. But if this House passes a Resolution admitting petitioners it becomes an Opposed Bill, and the Committee of Selection will have no kind of right to consider it as an Unopposed Bill. The whole question is, Shall four Members, in whom we place confidence, decide these questions, which involve matters of such interest and importance; and I appeal to the House, and to my right hon. friend the Chairman of Ways and Means, to allow this matter to go forward, as it can go forward, and not to allow any prejudice against preaching to interfere with it.

MR. ASQUITH (Fife, E.): I desire to associate myself with the appeal which my right hon. friend has just made to the House, that it should accede to this most reasonable request. He has discussed—and discussed with an authority second to none in this House—the technical objection raised by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Local Government Board, that the House has in some way or other lost control over this Bill. I do not think that objection is worth a moment's consideration. How do we stand in reference to this matter? We have two circumstances which differentiate it from ordinary cases. First of all, it is admitted that the power proposed by this Provisional Order is exceptional and unusual, and one which, if my information is correct, is hardly ever given by the Police and Sanitary Committee where the procedure is by Private Bill, and from my own experience at the Home Office it is a power which I should be very sorry to see conferred. When it is given it is not used, and if it were we would have in large towns what we had a few years ago at Eastbourne—a state of things almost bordering on civil war, which continued until this House interfered, and took away from the Corporation its powers in that respect. It is now proposed by this Provisional Order to confer powers which the larger municipal corporations do not possess. The other circumstance which differentiates it from ordinary cases is that there is a body of local opinion—I do not know whether it is large or small, but, at

any rate, it is entitled to be heard—which is strongly opposed to this exceptional procedure, and does not wish to see the local authority invested with these powers. It has not been given a local opportunity of making itself heard in the ordinary way, and the Provisional Order has not been considered by a Private Bill Committee, which could consider arguments and local arrangements, and come to a deliberate conclusion. This is not a Party question in any sense, and obvious considerations of common-sense and justice are quite sufficient to enable the House to accede to this motion.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (MR. CHAPLIN, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): I entirely agree that this is in no way whatever a Party question, and ought not to be decided on that ground. If I may express my own individual opinion, it is more a question of procedure in this House than anything else. My right hon. friend the Member for Bodmin made an appeal to the House on the ground that he was afraid we should come to a hasty decision on this matter, and that we would arrive at that decision mainly by prejudice. What are the facts of the case? The motion of the right hon. Gentleman is simply a repetition of a motion which has been made on two or three previous occasions with regard to this very question.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: That is not so. The present motion is for *locus standi*, the other was for a reference to the Police and Sanitary Committee.

MR. COURTNEY: I discriminated so far that I did not vote for the other motion.

MR. CHAPLIN: The purport and purpose of this motion is that the matter should go before a Committee, and that evidence should be taken, and therefore I am literally accurate in saying that the motion of the hon. Member is practically the same as has been already discussed on three similar occasions. What, then, becomes of the ground on which my right hon. friend appealed that it was likely we should be led into a hasty discussion? What are the arguments which have been adduced in order to persuade the House to accept the motion of the hon. Gentleman? I am bound to say,

Mr. Asquith.

with all respect to the ingenuity which the hon. Member has often displayed, that I do not think he has made out a reasonable case. He says he wishes to give an opportunity to the minority. The right hon. Gentleman opposite says that there is a body of local opinion against the Bill, but neither he nor anyone else appears to know what it is composed of. On the other hand, we have the opinion of the representative body at Rhyl conveyed to Parliament in the clearest and most distinct manner, first by an appeal to the Local Government Board, and then by a total absence of opposition. Supposing there was this large body of local opinion, it had an opportunity of opposing this Bill by lodging a petition. If there were any doubt as to whether it had *locus standi* or not, that would be a matter which could and would have been decided by the Court of Referees in the usual manner. Hon. Members seeking to carry this Motion now say, "Let that body of opinion get an opportunity of making this an opposed Bill, in order that its views may be thrashed out and discussed"; but if this large body of opinion exists, will the hon. Gentleman explain why, when it had the opportunity, it did not come forward.

MR. WALLACE (Perth): Does the right hon. Gentleman say that ratepayers have a *locus standi*?

MR. CHAPLIN: No, but the urban district council which they elect has, and it is through that that the ratepayers express their opinion. My hon. friend also pointed out that this Provisional Order affects other interests in addition to those of Rhyl. If this motion were to be carried now it would render the passing of this Bill during the present session impossible, and not only the interests of Rhyl, but the interests of two other places—Reading and Ramsgate—would also be affected in a very important way. That is the simple issue before the House. The opponents of the Provisional Order had every opportunity of petitioning against the Bill, and they chose not to do it. So far as my experience goes, a motion of this kind is most unusual; and certainly a very serious departure from the ordinary recognised practice of the proceedings of the House of Commons in regard to these matters; and I therefore

urge the desirability of opposing the motion of the hon. Member.

*MR. PERKS (Lincolnshire, S.): I think the right hon. Gentleman, with his long experience of this House, must have listened to plenty of discussions where people have sought by this machinery a general *locus*. That is the sole object of our discussion; if these objectors had had the ordinary *locus* as landowners or in some other capacity, they need never have come here——

MR. CHAPLIN: Landlords would have had a *locus*.

*MR. PERKS: The right hon. Gentleman was not listening to what I said. I said that if these people had been landowners they would have had an ordinary *locus*, but here were large bodies of ratepayers and residents who do not happen to be in the position of landowners, and who have no means of putting their views before the House upon the questions raised by these Provisional Orders, unless the House thinks proper to give them a general *locus*. I know that the Secretary to the Local Government Board said the other day that these people could have petitioned if they liked. I think when the hon. Gentleman said so he must have known that they had no claim to be heard unless the House gave them an opportunity by this machinery. And therefore it comes to this, that whenever a Provisional Order under the Local Government Board or the Board of Trade is promoted by some local authority, and the Provisional Order does not provide for taking land, or giving outside people the right of being heard before the proposed Committee, the local authority can work in collusion with the Departmental office, and they can prevent any inquiry being made at all into the proposal, except the inquiry made in their Department. Well, the Secretary said in an earlier part of this discussion that this motion cannot be carried out because the subject cannot be dealt with by an Unopposed Committee. But that hallucination has been absolutely disposed of by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bodmin, who pointed out that the effect of giving a general *locus* to the people of Rhyl would be to take the Bill away from the Unopposed Committee and put it before an Opposed Committee,

selected in the ordinary way. That Committee would take the part of the Bill relating to Ramsgate and Reading, and treat it as absolutely unopposed; and then they would consider the views put forward by a very considerable number of ratepayers and residents in the town of Rhyl, treating the Rhyl Provisional Order as an opposed one. This is a subject which ought not to be settled in this family way, between the local authorities and the Board. The questions between the Local Government Board and the Council of Rhyl ought to be threshed out in the light of day by a Committee, where the voice of this very important minority in the community can be thoroughly considered. I am afraid that the Under Secretary to the Local Government Board, since he has been in office, has shown very little sympathy or consideration for the wishes of the Dissenting communities of this country. Liberty seems to be almost a forgotten word in his Department.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The hon. Member has no right to make any such observation. Since I have been at the Local Government Board I have endeavoured to do my duty impartially.

*MR. PERKS: In this particular issue we have no practical illustration of the sympathy which the hon. Gentleman professes for these very large sections of the community. It is idle to say that this is an unimportant subject. It is a subject of the utmost importance—namely, the question of liberty of speech, and I trust that the House will see their way to allow this matter to be dealt with as suggested in the motion.

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE (Rochester): I do not think anyone would suspect me of being prejudiced in favour of hon. Gentlemen opposite on a matter of this kind. I do not know what these people of Rhyl may be, or whom they represent; but I confess that I think the House should approach this subject from a more serious point of view than was contemplated by the speech of my right hon. friend the Secretary to the Local Government Board. The House of Commons has always been extremely careful in dealing with religious susceptibilities, and for my part I think there is no policy more ill-judged than that which would give to

the public the impression that this House is not anxious that everybody should have a voice on all religious issues as freely as possible, and with as much liberty as can be afforded. Moreover, there is no time when such a policy could be more ill-judged than at the present time. I think it would be a very wise course for the House to decide, not the issue, but whether the issue has been tried by an impartial Committee of the House of Commons. Now, my right hon. friend will forgive me if I do not pay much attention to the technicalities which have been put forward. He says that the people can speak only through their elected representatives. That is all very well, but I do not think I have ever paid much attention to a technical point of that kind. The question is whether there is, or whether there is not, a certain body of men who desire to be heard upon their rights on the foreshore of Rhyl, and which they believe they are not to be allowed to exercise. To tell me that they might have spoken through the District Council may be a very good official argument, but—

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: My contention is that these people could had got a *locus* three or four weeks ago, when a motion could have been made.

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE: The motion might have been made, but it would have been equally rejected by the right hon. Gentleman. My argument was not directed to the point of time. My hon. friend used a phrase in his speech very likely to mislead the House. He spoke of the foreshore being the property of the Urban District Council of Rhyl. It is not the property of the Council, it is the property of the public; and the public have a right to it, not merely the majority, but the minority, which this House, above all other assemblies in the world, is bound to protect and say they shall be heard. We are not capable of hearing evidence in this House, but we have the power of appointing a Committee, and the power of allowing these gentlemen to appear before the Committee, and I think that would be the wise course to adopt. It has been said that what these gentlemen demand might be given under regulation. Of course; but the regulations might be of such a kind as to amount to prohibition, and this is just

Viscount Cranborne.

one of the questions that ought to be tried by an impartial body. My right hon. friend encouraged me to speak because he told us that this was not a Party question. Her Majesty's Government were perfectly right in putting forward the official views of the Local Government Board, but this is a matter on which the feeling of the House of Commons ought to be heard. Having in view that you are dealing with matters of religion, about which people's susceptibilities are acute, and legitimately acute, I think the very greatest care should be taken. When I hear hon. Members say in this House that all these matters are vanity, and the fads of peculiar people, and other things of that kind, that language offends me; for I know that these things depend upon ideas and thoughts which move the opinion of the people most deeply. By all means let us treat them with the greatest care and consideration, and I, for one, will not be a party to abuse these people here.

SIR H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I would recall the House to previous experience of matters of this description. This is not the first time that such a question has arisen. Hon. Members who were here from 1886 to 1892 will recollect a very crucial case which arose out of hasty legislation of this kind in reference to Eastbourne. My hon. and gallant friend the Member for Eastbourne on that occasion championed the cause of the local authority, the Eastbourne Corporation, which claimed to represent the people of Eastbourne. Parliament, however, decided that they did not represent the people of Eastbourne, and reversed their action. The Committee upstairs, without having heard the people who, as the noble Lord so wisely said, ought to have been heard on this question, by a majority of one imposed restrictions against which public opinion was roused. The peace of Eastbourne was broken; rioting resulted; and the state of affairs became so great a public scandal that the matter was brought before this House. My hon. and gallant friend will remember that that was the only occasion during that Parliament in which the Government, as a Government, was defeated in this House. The House took the matter into its own hands, and would not allow a question affecting the religious liberty of the people to be made a Party question.

The Conservative Party, which was then in a large majority, defeated the Government on that question. The result was that a Special Committee had to be appointed, and the whole case had to be reheard. Eventually an Act was passed by mutual arrangement, specially with the great assistance of the Duke of Devonshire, who was largely interested in Eastbourne, and Eastbourne has never been disturbed from that day to this, and the religious opinions of the Salvation Army have never been offended. I most respectfully urge the House not to forget that precedent, and that we should not be bound by a rigid adherence to red tape regulations. The Bill would not be imperilled by the acceptance of this motion; and I am sure the House would act wisely, if it is only in the interest of public peace and of civil and religious liberty, if they allow these people to be heard before a Committee of this House. The Committee will protect, on the one hand, the rights of the Urban District Council and those of its members who wish to maintain order, and, on the other hand, it will protect those who believe that their rights are being infringed.

MR. J. W. WILSON (Worcestershire, N.): I rise to support the motion made by my hon. friend. The clause objected to has been inserted, I will not say by oversight, but without an appreciation of the gravity of the case. It is a clause that usually comes before the Police and Sanitary Committee, and which is only granted after special evidence has been given, and with certain restrictions to well-defined areas. I do not wish to argue that the Bill should be referred to the Police and Sanitary Committee, but only to point out that it has been the custom to limit these powers very strictly to certain areas. I think the House should retain in its own hands the power of making restrictions of this kind, and that that power should not be handed over to an inspector of the Local Government Board.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs): No one who has listened to the Debate can but come to the conclusion that the arguments have been all on one side. It is very seldom that we have a situation in this House where every speaker outside the front bench is in favour of a particular proposal. Every Member has

supported the motion except the hon. Gentleman opposite, who, in this matter, represents Ramsgate. I would call the attention of the House to the fact that the motion is supported by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bodmin, whose high authority no one can dispute; by the noble Lord the Member for Rochester, who certainly is not prejudiced in favour of the mover of the motion; and by several independent Members. No case has been made against the proposal. It has been said we cannot do it from the point of view of procedure. But there is a precedent for it. Hon. Members will remember that, by order of this House, on a London and North-Western Railway Bill, permission was given for ratepayers to be represented before a Committee on that Bill, who would not otherwise have been represented. Then as to the wisdom of this policy. The hon. Member the Secretary to the Local Government Board said that if there is a local council we are bound to respect the views of that council. But I appeal to the hon. Gentleman that, if a county council were in favour of a certain railway scheme, would this House deny the right of individual ratepayers to oppose that scheme? That is the position we are in now. We contend that an inspector of the Local Government Board ought not to be supreme over this House, but subordinate to it; and if the inspector takes evidence this House should review it and decide upon it. Public feeling in Rhyl is very strong on this matter, and if this motion is not adopted there is an immense danger that we shall have similar scenes to those which occurred in Eastbourne a few years ago. In view of all these facts, I would appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board whether, even at this late hour, he should not reconsider the position he has taken up, and whether, after consultation with my hon. friend, a course might not be found which would meet the views of my hon. friend, and at the same time not sacrifice the dignity of the Council and of the Department. Perhaps the Debate might be adjourned to admit of consultation.

MR. CHAPLIN: I have already pointed out that in the opinion of the Department it is very important that the interests of the other two places which are affected by this Provisional Orders

Bill should not be sacrificed by the loss of the whole Bill. I believe I am right in saying that if the course suggested by the right hon. Gentleman opposite were adopted by the House it would be fatal to the Bill as a whole for the present year. As, however, there appears to be a very strong feeling on the part of a very considerable body of people at Rhyl, and as I apprehend there will be some feeling on the subject otherwise, I will endeavour to get over the difficulty by moving, myself, an Instruction to the Committee, of which I shall have to give notice, which will have the effect of dividing the Bill into two parts. This will allow the part affecting Reading and Ramsgate to go forward without further delay, leaving the question of Rhyl to be further considered. Then, I will accept the Resolution with regard to Rhyl, which will have the effect of giving the people at Rhyl the necessary *locus standi*.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE : I would ask whether, if I withdraw my motion now, it would be competent for me to move it, with reference to Rhyl, afterwards ?

MR. SPEAKER : If the hon. Member withdraws the Instruction, and has the assent of the House, he can set it down again, but he will have to give notice of it.

SIR H. H. FOWLER : The understanding is that in the Instruction which the right hon. Gentleman will move for the division of the Bill into two Bills, he will also give the necessary authority for a *locus standi* being granted to the people of Rhyl on the Rhyl Bill.

MR. CHAPLIN : Yes.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 4) BILL.

Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Order confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time upon Monday next.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 12) BILL.

Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Mr. Chaplin.

Bill, as amended, to be considered upon Monday next.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION (LIVERPOOL) BILL. [Lords.]

Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Order confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time upon Monday next.

LONDON UNITED TRAMWAYS BILL.

CHURCH STRETTON WATER BILL [Lords.]

Reported, with Amendments : Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

HAMPSTEAD CHURCH (EMMANUEL WEST END) BILL. [Lords.]

Reported, without Amendment ; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time.

GROSVENOR CHAPEL (LONDON) BILL [Lords.]

Reported, without Amendment ; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time.

STRETFORD GAS BILL. [Lords.]

COBHAM GAS BILL. [Lords.]

GREAT YARMOUTH CORPORATION BILL. [Lords.]

BURY CORPORATION BILL. [Lords.]

BURY CORPORATION WATER BILL [Lords.]

Reported, with Amendments ; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PETITIONS.

METROPOLIS MANAGEMENT ACTS AMENDMENT (BYE-LAWS) BILL.

Petition from St. Giles', London, in favour ; to lie upon the Table.

POOR LAW AMENDMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1845.

Petition from Stornoway, for alteration of law ; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour ;—From Rushden ;—Deal ;—and South West Lancashire ; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.**ARMY (LENGTH OF SERVICE AND AGES OF MEN IN EACH UNIT).**

Return [presented 22nd June] to be printed. [No. 240.]

ARMY (LENGTH OF SERVICE AND AGES OF MEN IN NEW BATTALRIES OF ROYAL ARTILLERY).

Return [presented 22nd June] to be printed. [No. 241.]

PILOTAGE.

Copy presented of Abstract of Returns relating to Pilots and Pilotage in the United Kingdom (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 284, of Session 1898) as furnished by the various Pilotage Authorities [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 242.]

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (GENERAL REPORTS).

Copies presented, of General Reports to the Education Department by the Chief Inspectors of the Eastern and North-Eastern Divisions [by command]; to lie upon the Table.

FISHERIES (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Report of Inspectors of Irish Fisheries on the Sea and Inland Fisheries of Ireland for 1898 [by command]; to lie upon the Table.

DUBLIN HOSPITALS.

Copy presented, of forty-first Report of the Board of Superintendence, with appendices [by command]; to lie upon the Table.

AGRARIAN OFFENCES (PROVINCES) (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of return by provinces of agrarian offences in Ireland for the year ended the 31st of December, 1898 [by command]; to lie upon the Table.

PEACE PRESERVATION (IRELAND) ACT, 1881 (ORDERS).

Copies presented, of two Orders in Council, dated 17th June, 1899, with respect to the importation into Ireland of Arms and Ammunition [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, No.

VOL. LXXIII. [FOURTH SERIES].

2295 [by command]; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN SCOTLAND (TECHNICAL EDUCATION).

Return ordered, "showing the extent to which, and the manner in which, Local Authorities in Scotland have allocated and applied funds to the purposes of Technical Education during the year ended 15th day of May 1899, under the following Acts: Local Taxation (Customs and Excise) Act, 1890; Education and Local Taxation Account (Scotland) Act, 1892; Technical Schools (Scotland) Act, 1887; Technical Instruction Amendment (Scotland) Act, 1892; and Public Libraries Acts."—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—

BRYNMAWR AND WESTERN VALLEYS RAILWAY BILL

with Amendments.

Amendments to—

MID-KENT GAS BILL [Lords.]

without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to enable Courts to suspend the Certificates of Trawlers convicted of Illegal Trawling." [Trawlers Certificates Suspension Bill. [Lords.]

Also, a Bill intituled, "An Act to amend the Law with regard to Reformatory Schools." [Reformatory Schools Amendment Bill. [Lords.]

And also a Bill intituled, "An Act to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Electric Lighting Acts, 1882, 1888, and 1890, relating to Arbroath, Hawick, Kirkcaldy, and Musselburgh." [Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 13) Bill. [Lords.]

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 13) BILL. [Lords.]

Read the first time; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 250.]

CHAIRMEN OF BOARDS OF GUARDIANS.

Bill to constitute Chairmen of Boards of Guardians ex-officio Justices of the Peace, ordered to be brought in by Sir James Fortescue Flannery, Mr. Arnold,

Mr. Lloyd-George, Mr. D'Arcy Wyvill, Mr. Walter Rothschild, Sir Walter Foster, and Sir Charles Dilke.

CHAIRMEN OF BOARDS OF GUARDIANS BILL.

"To constitute Chairmen of Boards of Guardians ex-officio Justices of the Peace," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 251.]

QUESTIONS.

CAVAN MILITIA.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether any complaint has been made to him of the change of training ground for the Cavan Militia; whether it is intended to incorporate this battalion with Monaghan or Fermanagh; and whether, as Cavan is a large and central county, he will see that the listing arrangements are left intact.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): No complaint has been received by the Secretary of State as to the place of training for the 4th Battalion of the Royal Irish Fusiliers; and there is no intention of incorporating that battalion of Militia with any other.

NORTH-WEST FRONTIER CAMPAIGNS.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the regiments which were on active service on the North-West Frontier in 1897 and 1898 will be permitted to bear on the colours and appointments the names of the engagements in which they took part.

*MR. WYNDHAM: No recommendation to this effect has as yet been received from the Commander-in-Chief in India.

RECRUITING STANDARDS.

GENERAL LAURIE (Pembroke, Haverfordwest): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War what disposal is made of such recruits specially enlisted as do not on re-measurement reach the full standard; and, whether they are retained in the service as effective soldiers, or whether they are discharged as physically

unfit for service; and, if the latter, how long they are retained before discharge.

*MR. WYNDHAM: Recruits enlisted under standard are reported on by the medical officer once a month for the first three months of their service. If the report is favourable they are retained; if unfavourable, they are brought before a medical board. That board decides whether they are to be discharged or retained as likely to become efficient soldiers. The decision of the board is acted on without reference to the standard.

GENERAL LAURIE: Arising out of that answer, am I to understand that these undersized striplings are to be retained in the Service?

*MR. WYNDHAM: I do not think the description of the hon. and gallant Member is at all applicable.

GENERAL LAURIE: They do not come up to the standard at any rate.

TROOPS FOR THE CAPE.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the Government has decided upon reinforcing the troops at the Cape to a total of 40,000 men, of which number 15,000 would go from India, and the remainder from this country.

*MR. WYNDHAM: No, Sir.

MR. DAVITT (Mayo, S.): Has the hon. Gentleman's attention been called to statements to that effect in several London newspapers recently, and is there any foundation for them?

*MR. WYNDHAM: We see a great many things in the papers. There are obvious objections to inviting the representatives of the War Office to correct the rumours that are published.

IRELAND AND THE MILITARY WORKS BILL.

MR. CRILLY (Mayo, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War what portion of the sum of £1,422,000, which the statement laid upon the Table of the House on Monday night last informs us is to be spent during the coming financial year under the Barracks Act of 1890 and the Military Works Act of 1897, will be devoted to military purposes under these Acts in Ireland; in what

localities will the money, if any, allotted to Ireland be spent; and what special works are in contemplation in those localities.

*MR. WYNDHAM: It is expected that about £170,000 will be spent during the present financial year on barrack services in Ireland. The largest items are for the reconstruction of barracks at Dublin and the Curragh.

CRIMEAN VETERANS.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether he is aware that Patrick Hennessy, whose regimental number is 1,780, enlisted at Tralee, County Kerry, in January, 1846, for service in the 95th Foot (Derbyshires), and served with his regiment all through the Crimean War, and was engaged in all the battles under the command of Colonel Smith, and was wounded at the battle of Inkerman; that he also served all through the Indian Mutiny under Colonel Hume, taking active part in all the battles; that he was specially noted for his bravery in action by General Sir H. Rose; and that he also served in China for four years, also in Egypt, Malta, and Africa; and whether, seeing that Patrick Hennessy is now aged 76 years, and was discharged in 1868 with only a pension of 8d. per day after over 21 years' active and foreign service, the War Office authorities will take into consideration with a view to an increased pension the condition of this man.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS, Birmingham, S.): This case has been considered by the Chelsea Commissioners on several occasions. As Hennessy failed to earn any good conduct badges it is not possible to increase his pension.

MR. FLAVIN: What did he do in the Crimean War? He served England, and is not thanked for it.

CORK MILITARY CANTEENS.

MR. MAURICE HEALY: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the military canteens in Cork are supplied by a London co-operative society, thereby shutting out all local trade; whether, before the arrangement was made, local firms were given an opportunity of ten-

dering for the contract; and whether steps will be taken to change or modify a system so injurious to the trade of the locality.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: The canteens in Cork are supplied by contractors selected by a board of officers representing the several regiments, with the approval of general officer commanding. Local firms had every opportunity for tendering; a large number did so, and three of the four successful firms were local. The Secretary of State does not propose to interfere with the discretion of the officers on the spot.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): May I ask whether it is the fact that the contract has been given to this canteen society at a price in excess of that quoted by the local contractors?

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, N.E.): Has any contract been entered into with this society in the Cork district previous to this year?

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: I can not say without inquiry.

LAND REVENUE IN INDIA.

SIR H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India what is the acreage of land in India paying land revenue; what was the amount payable in 1898 and in 1899; what was the extent of land under sugar cane in those years, and what was the amount of land revenue paid in respect of such land; and was there any difference in the rate of land revenue payable in Bengal.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): (1) The acreage in British India assessed to land revenue was, according to the latest returns—for the year 1896-97—307,000,000 acres. (2) The amount of land revenue payable in 1897-98—actual accounts—was Rx.25,684,000, and in 1898-99—revised estimate—Rx.27,679,000. These figures do not include the revenue credited to the Irrigation Department. The receipts of 1898-99 were swollen by the payments of revenue suspended during the famine year. (3) The area under sugar cane in British India during 1897-98 was 2,675,763 acres. I have not yet received the sugar area figures of 1898-99. The

returns do not give separately the amount paid in respect of this area, but the latest approximate estimate by the Government of India puts that amount—independent of irrigation returns—at 640,000 tens of rupees. (4) There is from year to year no material change in the amount or rate of the land revenue payable in the Province of Bengal, where most of the land is permanently settled.

WAZIRI RAIDS.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he has received any information as to the reported raid on Sunday last of a force of Waziris upon cattle in the Lower Kuram, and as to the encounter which took place between these tribesmen and a pursuing party; and whether any further developments are expected to arise out of this incident.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I have received no official information on the subject of this incident, and am therefore disposed to believe that no political importance is attached to it. The conditions of this part of the Indian frontier are such that raids of this kind are not an unusual occurrence.

BANDAR ABBAS.

SIR MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGREE (Bethnal Green, N.E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Her Majesty's Government have any information, official or otherwise, confirmatory of the statement that the Governor of Bandar Abbas had received a letter from Teheran, intimating that that port was to be ceded to or otherwise placed in possession of Russia; whether the island of Karagh, or Karak, 30 miles north-west of Bushire, which was once under British occupation, is still in our possession; and whether the British Government retains any lien on the port of Bassadore, formerly a station of the Indian Navy, situate at the north-west extremity of the Island of Kishin, near Ormuz.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): (1) The answer is in the negative. (2) British troops were withdrawn from the Island of Karak after the conclusion with Persia of the Treaty of Paris of 4th March, 1857. (3) Since the withdrawal in 1883 of the

Indian troops stationed at Bassadore, the Indian Government's buildings at that station have been maintained under the charge of a British Indian subject paid by the Government of India.

YUSSUF YUNNAN.

MR. HEDDERWICK (Wick Burghs): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the murderers of Yussuf Yunnan, the agent of the British Armenian Relief Fund, have yet been punished.

*MR. BRODRICK: It is understood that the fresh trial of the murderers of Yussuf Yunnan resulted in five of the accused being condemned to penal servitude for life and the remainder for nine years, but no confirmation of this report has been received.

BRITISH VICE-CONSUL AT JOHANNESBURG.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, before a person is appointed by a foreign Government a consul in a town situated in a self-governing British colony, and after the approval of the representative of the local government of that colony has been asked and obtained, it is usual to ask the Imperial Government whether there are objections to the appointment before it is made or before an exequatur for the person appointed is asked for; if so, whether the application is made to the Governor of the colony or to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs; and whether the British Consul at Johannesburg was appointed after a mere notification, or whether the approval of the Government of the Transvaal Republic was first asked.

*MR. BRODRICK: (1) When a consul is appointed in Her Majesty's dominions, the representative of his government at this Court makes a formal application to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs for the issue of the Queen's exequatur to empower the consul to act in his official capacity. If he is in the regular consular service, steps are at once taken to prepare Her Majesty's exequatur. If he is not a member of the regular service, and is resident at the post to which he is appointed, the local authorities are first asked whether there is any objection known by them to the appointment.

(2) In the case of the appointment of the present Vice-Consul at Johannesburg, the Government of the South African Republic were asked whether they had any objection to him, and no objection being made he was appointed.

SAMOAN COMMISSION.

MR. HOGAN (Tipperary, Mid.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has received an official telegraphic summary of the Report of the Samoan Commission; and, if so, whether he can give a general indication of the constitutional changes recommended.

*MR. BRODRICK: Telegraphic reports have been received from Mr. Eliot, the British Commissioner, giving information with regard to the labours of the Commission, but their full report must be awaited and considered before any communication can be made on the subject.

EXAMINATION OF RAILWAY PLANS.

MR. MOSS (Denbighshire, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether it is the practice of his Department to refuse any application made by the public to inspect the plans and sections of railways deposited with the Board of Trade unless the railway company concurs in such application; and whether in future, in order to avoid the expense of a special survey involved by such refusal, he will allow the same to be inspected for the purpose of valuation by persons duly authorised to do so on behalf of public representative bodies.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): The plans are deposited with the Board of Trade for Departmental use and not for the purposes of public inspection. Under the Standing Orders plans are deposited at certain places where they may be seen on payment of the prescribed fee. The Board of Trade have no machinery for the public exhibition of the plans deposited with them, and I regret that I cannot meet the wishes of the hon. Member with regard to this matter.

H.M.S. "JACKAL."

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the Secretary for Scotland is aware that between the 1st January and the 29th April the crew of H.M.S. "Jackal" were

allowed twenty-three days' leave of absence; and, having regard to the fact that the vessel is employed on sea police duty for the Fishery Board, will he state whether this leave was granted with the sanction of the Board; and will he state the number of days' annual leave granted to the crews of Fishery Board cruisers.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): Leave of absence on board H.M.S. "Jackal" is regulated by the Admiralty without consultation with the Fishery Board. I am informed by the Fishery Board that there is no definite period fixed for annual leave to the crews of their cruisers, it being left to the discretion of the commanders thereof to give such leave to members of their crew as they may be able to arrange without interference with the duties of the vessels under their command.

MINOR LIGHTS IN THE CONGESTED DISTRICTS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the Congested Districts Board have yet arrived at any decision in regard to the points where minor lights are to be fixed in the congested area.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: The Congested Districts Board cannot at present submit a complete scheme of all the points at which minor lights are required in congested districts. The various applications for such lights are receiving the anxious consideration of the Board in relation to the important questions of cost, suitability, and priority of treatment. Within the last few years 17 minor lighthouses have been erected in these districts at a cost of £8,350.

MR. WEIR: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware there are no minor lights off the coast of Ross-shire?

No answer was given.

NEW FISHERY CRUISER.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he will state when the Board propose to advertise for tenders for the new fishery cruiser, and will he say what is to be her tonnage and cost.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I am informed by the Fishery Board that they have not yet decided as to when they will advertise for tenders for a new

cruiser, nor as to her tonnage or cost. I may add, however, that all these matters will receive attention in due course.

EDINBURGH CASTLE AND HOLYROOD PALACE.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works if he will consider the expediency of extending the hours for closing Edinburgh Castle and Holyrood Palace on Saturdays during the summer months, so that the public may be afforded better opportunities than at present for inspecting these places of public interest on Saturday afternoons.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (MR. AKERS DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): Yes, Sir, I think the proposal a reasonable one; and with regard to Holyrood Palace, I will see that it is carried out experimentally during the present summer. I will endeavour to secure a similar arrangement at the Castle; but other authorities have to be consulted.

COLCHESTER BOARD SCHOOL.

*SIR WEETMAN PEARSON (Colchester): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Committee of Council on Education will he explain why, notwithstanding recent legislation on the vaccination question, the Education Department has refused to sanction the apprenticeship of Emma Merry as pupil on probation at Stockwell Street Board School, Colchester, on the ground that she has not been properly vaccinated, she being over the age of 16.

*THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL ON EDUCATION (SIR J. GORST, Cambridge University): The girl was refused admission as a pupil teacher on the grounds stated. The Committee of Council are advised that the vaccination of teachers is desirable in the interest of the children who attend the elementary schools. They are not aware that recent legislation has affected the matter.

CARBOLIC ACID POISONING.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the large number of painful deaths by poisoning from carbolic acid; whether he is aware that coroners have repeatedly urged that carbolic acid

should only be sold as a scheduled poison, and that the Pharmaceutical Society has, in accordance with Section 2 of the Pharmacy Act of 1868, applied to the Privy Council to add it to the list of poisons controlled by that Act, but without effect; whether in Ireland carbolic acid has been scheduled as a poison, and can only be sold by qualified persons, and if he can explain why the Privy Council has refused to schedule carbolic acid; and whether it is proposed to deal with the subject in any other way.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): I am aware that a considerable number of deaths yearly are due to carbolic acid poisoning, and that it has frequently been suggested that the sale of carbolic acid should be placed under restrictions such as apply to poisons named in the schedule to the Pharmacy Act of 1868. Some years ago the Pharmaceutical Society did apply for the insertion of carbolic acid in that schedule; but it was considered that the gain to the public would not be commensurate with the inconvenience arising from the restrictions, and the application has not been recently renewed. I believe that the Irish Government have scheduled carbolic acid, but that was done under an Irish Act and without consulting the Privy Council in this country. I understand that the objections to scheduling this poison in England have now been lessened by the fact that regulations for the keeping, dispensing, and selling of poisons within the meaning of the Act of 1868 have now been prescribed, and that the Privy Council are prepared to consider whether carbolic acid can advantageously be dealt with in some way, but they cannot take any action except upon a resolution of the Pharmaceutical Society.

CASE OF THOMAS GILHAM.

MR. FLAVIN: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that Thomas Gilham was transferred by the Guardians of the Strand Union, London, to the Listowel (County Kerry) Workhouse, of which he is now an inmate, at the expense of the ratepayers, although he spent almost his whole life of 64 years in England; whether the removal of Gilham was illegal inasmuch as his removal warrant was not signed by two magistrates, and the date of

transfer also omitted; and whether the Local Government Board will order the removal from the Listowel Union of Thomas Gilham to the Strand Union, London, at the expense of the Strand Guardians.

THE SECRETARY OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, Tyrone, S.): I am aware of the case referred to in the question. But I am informed that the warrant of removal was in fact signed by two magistrates, and that the date in it was correct. The Local Government Board would not in any case be empowered to order the removal of the man from Listowel to the Strand Union; but I am not aware of any ground for considering that the removal to Ireland was illegal. It appears that the man stated on oath that he had on a previous occasion, in the year 1889, been removed to the parish of Listowel in the Listowel Union, and was then acknowledged as a legally settled parishioner of that parish and union.

MR. FLAVIN: Will the right hon. Gentleman introduce legislation which will make it impossible—as it is now with regard to Scotland—for a pauper to be thus deported to Ireland?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I must ask for notice.

ART BRANCH, SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUM.

MR. MAURICE HEALY: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury why the Civil Service Commissioners, in the case of the examination held in December last to fill the place of assistant in the South Kensington Museum (Art Branch), departed from the usual practice of announcing the result of the examination in the *Gazette*.

***THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY** (Mr. HANBURY, Preston): On the occurrence of the vacancy in question notice was given that an open competitive examination would be held, and two gentlemen entered their names as candidates. One of these subsequently withdrew. The other presented himself for examination, and, as at two similar competitions he had passed in the obligatory subjects, the Commissioners decided to regard him as the successful candidate. No actual ex-

amination was held, and therefore no result was announced; but the issue of a Civil Service certificate was duly recorded in the *London Gazette* of the 6th January last.

INSPECTORS OF POSTMEN.

SIR JOHN LENG: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster-General, whether the rule of the Post Office when inspectors of postmen are on their holidays is to appoint capable postmen, irrespective of seniority, as their substitutes; whether he is aware that the Inspector of Postmen at Dundee is at present on holiday leave, and a second-class telegraphist is acting as substitute for him, and why the general rule is not followed at Dundee; and, whether future vacancies in the class of inspectors will, as in other towns, be reserved exclusively for postmen.

MR. HANBURY: No fixed rule exists. No such officer as second-class telegraphists now exists. Otherwise the answer to the second paragraph is in the affirmative. This practice has been followed at Dundee for many years in consequence of none of the senior postmen being qualified to act as inspector. In case of a vacancy in the class of inspectors the claims and qualifications of all the postmen would be considered before those of sorting clerks and telegraphists.

KNOCKNINNY POST OFFICE.

MR. JORDAN (Fermanagh, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster-General, if he is aware that some time since the postal authorities removed the sub-post office and parcel delivery service from the premises of the Knockninny and Lough Erne Hotel, County Fermanagh; if so, could he state on what grounds; and has he had any communication on the matter from the owner and local landlord, J. G. V. Porter, Esq.

MR. HANBURY: There never has been a sub-post office at Knockninny or at the hotel mentioned.

TELEGRAPHIC WITHDRAWALS FROM THE POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK.

MR. TUIITE (Westmeath, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster-General, whether any arrangement can be made by which the immediate withdrawal of

money by a Post Office Savings Bank depositor could be effected by a service message without imposing the cost of a telegram on the depositor.

MR. HANBURY: The Savings Bank does not pay its way already, and there seems no reason why the cost of the telegrams should be borne by the Post Office instead of by the depositor who desires to withdraw money without waiting to give notice in the usual way. Since the arrangements were made in 1893 the withdrawals on same or next day have risen from 49,000 to 152,000.

HASSETT'S ESTATE.

MR. MAURICE HEALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the date on which the request issued by the Land Judge under s. 40 of the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1896, in the matter of Hasset's estate, was lodged with the Land Commission; whether the valuer appointed by the Land Commission to inspect the lands completed his inspection early in January last; whether the Land Commission have since furnished their report to the Land Judge, and, if so, when; and, if not, will he explain why, and what has been the cause of the delay; and whether the Receiver has meanwhile stopped the abatement of rent always hitherto allowed to the tenants, and is availing himself of the delay to take proceedings for rent.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. G. W. BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): The request of the Land Judge in Hasset's estate was lodged with the Land Commission on the 29th of July, 1898, the eve of the vacation. The report of the inspector was received on the 26th of January, and the report of the Land Commissioner was transmitted to the Land Judge on the 19th of June. The character and circumstances of the estate, which comprises about 3,700 acres in the occupation of about 75 tenants, much of the land being held in undivided shares, and many of the holdings being sub-divided or sublet, interposed many difficulties in the preparation and making of the report prescribed by the 40th section, while the intervention of the vacation and the pressure of business arising under the Land Purchase Acts necessarily delayed the completion of the report. I am informed there is no Court

Receiver over this estate. I have no knowledge of the matters referred to in the last paragraph.

IRISH ROAD CONTRACTORS' SURETIES.

MR. DALY (Monaghan, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that great inconvenience to road contractors and expense to ratepayers has been caused owing to road contractors having to attend before a meeting of the county council with two sureties to perfect their bonds for the smallest job; whether he is aware that Carrickmacross is 22 Irish miles from where the county council hold their meetings, and that it would take under the new rule £1 8s. to take a contractor and his two sureties to perfect his bond before the county council for building a gullet which the county surveyor allows £2 for completing; and whether he will direct in future that the district council have power to perfect contractors' bonds as the magistrates did at road sessions under the grand jury.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: Under the provisions of the Procedure Order the bonds of the contractor must be entered into with the county council, but there is nothing in the Order as to the place at which these bonds must be signed. The Local Government Board are of opinion that the contractors should be allowed to enter into their bonds at the office of the rural district council, and it is only necessary that some accredited officer of the county council should attend for the purpose upon a date named to enable this to be done.

CARRICKMACROSS FEVER HOSPITAL.

MR. DALY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that an election of medical officer for the fever hospital of Carrickmacross will take place on the 27th inst., and that the County Council of Monaghan will have to contribute about two-thirds of the funds to maintain the fever hospital of Carrickmacross, although they have not any representation on the committee of the fever hospital of Carrickmacross; and whether he will prevent the election of a doctor to the institution mentioned until the County Council have a voice in the selection.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: The Local Government Board are not yet in possession of sufficient information to enable me to reply to the second portion of the first paragraph. The Board, however, have already written to the secretary of the hospital stating that they consider that no permanent appointment should be made to the vacant office of medical officer until the constitution of the governing body under Section 15 of the Local Government Act has been determined, and the newly appointed committee have taken over the management of the hospital. The Board also stated that they thought that temporary arrangements could be made for the performance of the medical officer's duties pending a permanent appointment.

MR. DALY: Seeing that the meeting is fixed for the 27th inst., will the right hon. Gentleman see that the appointment is not permitted to be made? Will the right hon. Gentleman direct the Local Government Board to take action accordingly?

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: I am not quite certain the Local Government Board have any power to do so, but I will inquire.

LAND COMMISSION AT LONGFORD.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a Land Commission Court was to have held a sitting in Longford, beginning its cases on Monday last, but at the last moment the sitting was postponed; could he explain why it was postponed; is he aware that much dissatisfaction exists in County Longford over the delay in hearing these cases; and can anything be done to expedite them.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: The proposed sitting at Longford was postponed for the reason notified to the parties interested, viz., that the services of the lay Assistant Commissioner who had been allocated for duty in Longford were urgently required for pressing work in connection with the Land Purchase Department. The Commissioners will arrange for the taking up of the list referred to at as early a date as the existing arrangements of the sub-commissions will permit of.

LAND CASES AT CAVAN.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieute-

nant of Ireland whether he can state the number of cases now listed for hearing before sub-commission and county courts in the Unions of Cavan and Bawnboy; and whether there have been complaints made to him of the delay in having these cases disposed of.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: There are 552 applications to fix fair rents from the Union of Cavan, 129 from that portion of Bawnboy situate in County Cavan, and 124 from that portion of the same union situate in County Leitrim, that have not as yet been listed for hearing. A Sub-Commission has been engaged almost continuously for nearly two years in the disposal of lists containing cases from the Union of Cavan, and a sitting was held at that town on the 20th, 21st and 22nd instant, for the further hearing of cases from that union. As regards the disposal of cases from the Union of Bawnboy, a Sub-Commission was working in the district from the beginning of last December till the middle of May, and it is probable that a new list for that district will be issued in the course of the next couple of months. I am in communication with the Clerks of the Peace as to the number of applications pending in the county courts of Cavan and Leitrim.

IRISH TENANTS AND RATES.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that grave dissatisfaction exists in Ireland amongst a large section of the population over that portion of the Local Government Act, 1890, which compels tenants rated under £4 to pay rates in future; and whether he can hold out any hope for a change in that portion of the Act in this or next session.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: The Local Government Board have not heard through any sources of information open to them that grave dissatisfaction exists among the occupiers rated under £4, who will now become primarily liable for the poor rate. It is to be borne in mind that these persons will receive a reduction of rent equal to the appropriate standard amount. The answer to the second paragraph is in the negative.

LAND APPEALS IN NORTH KERRY.

MR. FLAVIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ire-

land whether he is aware that great inconvenience is caused to a very large number of people in North Kerry by the hearing of appeals in fair rent cases in the county of Kerry at Killarney by the Appeal Commissioners; and whether representations will be made to the Land Commissioners to hold their Appeal Court at Tralee, which is the most central place in Kerry.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: Lists of appeals for hearing at Killarney invariably contain cases from the County Kerry generally, as well as cases from North West Cork. Killarney is selected as the place of sitting owing to its central position, which renders it the most convenient place for the parties concerned, as well as for the Land Commissioners, whose public duties do not permit of their holding sittings for the hearing of special cases in each of the towns within the area from which the cases for hearing have been listed.

MR. FLAVIN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that tenants from this district cannot get home the same night?

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: I cannot say if that is so.

RAILWAY GUARANTEES IN IRELAND.

MR. FLAVIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the ratepayers of the baronies of Irraghticonnor, Trughenackmy, Corkaguiny, Magunihy, Clanmaurice, Iveragh, Glanerough, North Dunkerron, and South Dunkerron, in the County of Kerry, have contributed between the years 1875 and 1897 in railway guarantees the sum of £215,068; and whether, owing to this continued heavy taxation on the ratepayers, some relief will be given to them in the form of a free grant in aid of the guaranteed lines of railway.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: I am informed by the Secretary to the County Council that the sum of £165,451 was levied in respect of railway guarantees on the baronies named, which comprise the entire County of Kerry, between the years 1875 and 1897 (inclusive). The Treasury contributions in the same period amounted to £26,790. As regards the second paragraph, considerable relief will be afforded to the county in respect of

railway charges under Section 58. Subsection 4, of the Local Government Act of 1898.

CONVICT THOMAS COLLINS.

MR. FLAVIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Thomas Collins, a prisoner now confined in Maryborough Jail, was convicted at the Munster Assizes, 1891 (with two other men), and sentenced to ten years' penal servitude; and, whether, seeing that the prison doctor has reported in the early part of 1897 that Thomas Collins was mentally afflicted, that the other two men were released in February 1897, and that a Petition largely signed by magistrates and others was presented praying for the release of Thomas Collins, he will consider the desirability of giving Collins his liberty.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: This convict was released on licence in the ordinary course about a month ago.

DOWNPATRICK DISTRICT COUNCIL.

MR. RENTOUL (Down, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland is he aware that the Rural District Council of Downpatrick, on the 29th of May, by a majority of 41 to four, asked the Local Government Board to authorise the Council to appoint one of the two branch banks in Downpatrick as treasurer to the Council; will he explain why the Local Government Board refused to comply with this request; and whether the wishes of the great majority of the council can be complied with.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: The answer to the first paragraph of this question is in the affirmative. The Local Government Board did not feel warranted in depriving the treasurer, transferred to the Rural District Council, of the advantages secured to him by the provisions of the Act, which preserve the rights of this class of existing officer. Under Section 85 (1) the treasurer of the union becomes the treasurer of the rural district council, and by Section 101 (1) the powers of the Local Government Board as to the treasurers of unions and rural sanitary authorities is preserved. The treasurer of the Rural District Council of Downpatrick must, therefore, remain in office until he "dies, resigns, or is removed by the Local Govern-

ment Board." He refuses to resign, and as he is willing to give the Council every facility that any other bank will, and has in no respect failed in his duty, the Local Government Board cannot remove him from office merely for the purpose of allowing him to be supplanted by a rival banker, who has, I understand, been actively canvassing for this position.

DOWNPATRICK POOR LAW LOANS.

MR. RENTOUL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the residue of money borrowed for the use of certain defined areas in the poor law union of Downpatrick, and expended in those areas, has been ordered by the Local Government Board to be levied on the entire rural district, although the Downpatrick Board of Guardians is stated to have disapproved of the proposed order and the Rural District Council has protested against it; whether it is possible to meet the wishes of the Council in this matter; and whether in future similar expenditure may or must be levied off the entire rural districts.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: In answer to this question I would refer my hon. and learned friend to the reply given by me yesterday to a similar question put by the hon. Member for South Donegal respecting the area of charge in respect of the Bundoran Water Works.

RULES OF THE CIVIL SERVICE.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, in view of the fact that the Local Government Board have informed inquirers that they do not possess the rules of the Civil Service, referred to in Section 115, Sub-section (6) of the Local Government Act, 1898, and the seventh schedule thereof, will he explain how are local authorities and officers claiming compensation to obtain these rules, as no bookseller can supply them; and will he order them to be printed and furnished to local authorities, or in some way made available for reference.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: Information as to pensions and compensation payable in accordance with the scale provided by the Acts and Rules relating to Her Majesty's Civil Service is supplied, not by the Local Government Board, but by the Treasury, to whom all inquiries in the

matter should be addressed. I have forwarded to the hon. and learned Member a copy of a statement which is sent out by the Treasury to local authorities, or interested individuals, in reference to compensation under the Local Government Acts in force in England and Scotland. Local authorities in Ireland will be informed by the Local Government Board that any information required by them respecting this matter will be supplied by the Treasury, to whom, as I have said, application should be made direct.

INISKEA POLICE.

MR. CRILLY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland how many policemen are stationed on the Island of Iniskea, off the coast of Mayo; and what length of service on the island has each policeman now stationed there.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: There are three policemen stationed on Iniskea. One of these, the acting sergeant in charge, has had two months' service on the island, and the two constables have had six and eleven months' service respectively.

BELMULLET COASTGUARD STATION.

MR. CRILLY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what were the special reasons, if any, which existed for sanctioning the new police station, recently established at Elly Bay Coastguard Station, Belmullet; whether the new station is meant to be permanent or temporary; and how many police have been drafted to Elly Bay.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: The police station referred to, consisting at present of four men, was formed in December last for the better protection of life and property in this district. The station will remain at Elly Bay so long as it is considered necessary by the authorities responsible for the peace of the locality.

AUGHNACLOY DISPENSARY DOCTOR.

MR. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Aughnacloy, where Dr. Phillips resides, is twelve miles from portions of the dispensary district of which that gentleman has charge; can any cases be cited in England where the poor needing medical relief have to travel twelve miles in order to obtain it; and if the Local

Government Board cannot see their way to adopt the proposal made by the Rev. Father Callan, P.P., to have the five divisions of Truagh erected into a dispensary district, with a resident medical officer, will they devise some other scheme to mitigate the hardships now endured by the poor of the locality.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: The fact may be as stated in the first paragraph, though, I believe, the distance in a direct line from the doctor's residence to the most remote points in the district is not more than nine miles; and this distance is not so great as in many other districts in Ireland. I have no information as to the second paragraph. The district of Aughnacloy was formed many years ago; no complaints have hitherto been received as to the distances to be travelled by the sick poor of the district, and the Local Government Board do not consider that any inconvenience is inflicted on the poor by the continuance of the existing arrangements, the more especially as a new medical depôt is to be opened in the district.

SALE OF FOOD AND DRUGS BILL.

MR. STRACHEY (Somerset, S.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can promise not to take the Report of the Sale of Food and Drugs Bill this month.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (MR. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): There is no probability of this Bill being taken in the course of the present month.

LUNACY BILL.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is the intention of the Government to proceed with the Lunacy Bill during the present session.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I can make no statement at present.

CELTIC GOLD ORNAMENTS.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury what steps have been taken with a view to the restoration to Ireland of the Irish gold ornaments recently reported on by a Treasury Committee; and if he can inform the House as to the approximate date on which the restora-

tion of these objects to Ireland will be made.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As legal questions are involved in this matter which will shortly come into court, I cannot, until they are decided, give the information asked for.

SCOTTISH BILL.

SIR JOHN LENG: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when the next stage of the Private Legislature Procedure (Scotland) Bill will be taken; and if time will be allowed to the corporations of cities and burghs in Scotland to consider its proposal to place them under the English Municipal Corporations (Borough Funds) Act, 35 and 36 Vic., c. 91.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: With regard to the first paragraph of the question I am unable to say when we shall be able to take the next stage of the Bill. With regard to the second paragraph, I think the hon. Member for Dundee must be under some misapprehension, for there is no intention, so far as I am aware, to extend the Municipal Corporations Act, which applies to England, to Scottish municipalities.

UNDERSIZED FISH BILL.

MAJOR RASCH: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, having regard to the necessity of legislation for the protection of immature fish, he will give facilities for the discussion and passing of the Undersized Fish Bill during the present session.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I shall be very glad to see this Bill referred to a Select Committee, which, I think, has been suggested by my right hon. friend in charge of the Bill, as mentioned by the hon. Member for Grimsby in the question lower down on the Paper, and I hope there will be no opposition from any part of the House.

LAKES OF KILLARNEY.

MR. FLAVIN: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to a large meeting, presided over by His Grace the Duke of Westminster, comprising representative people of different religious and political opinions, held at Grosvenor House, on Thursday the 22nd instant, in connection with the sale of the Herbert Estate, which includes a very large portion of the far-

famed Killarney scenery; and whether, owing to the unanimous expression of opinion of the meeting and in different parts of the United Kingdom, the Government will further consider the advisability of securing Killarney as a national park for the people, as the Falls of Niagara have been secured by the joint action of the United States and Canada.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think I can add anything on the question of the Government's policy to what I said in answer to a similar question put to me by the hon. Gentleman and by other hon. Members on a previous occasion. I see, by the question of the hon. Gentleman, and by the report which I have seen of the meeting to which he refers, that the subject is engaging the public interest, and it seems to be eminently a question on which the benevolence of private individuals might be properly exercised.

MR. FLAVIN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that several speakers at the meeting expressed the opinion that the Government ought to step in and purchase this estate for the nation?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes, Sir; they did express that opinion.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury what will be the business on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers, I wish to put a question with regard to the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer last night that the Tithes Bill would be taken on Tuesday. I wish to ask whether the right hon. Gentleman will not postpone the Second Reading to a later date, considering that it was only introduced on Thursday.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am sorry that the right hon. Gentleman thinks the time too short. I think the interval between this morning, when the Bill was circulated, and Tuesday next, is really sufficient both for the House and the country. It is a very simple proposition, right or wrong, we have to make, and I

hope the right hon. Gentleman will not object to the course we propose to take.

SIR CHARLES DILKE: If the Clerical Tithes Bill Debate is not finished on Tuesday, is it intended to proceed with it on Wednesday?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If the Debate is not finished on the Tuesday it will be continued on Wednesday.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): Will the Secondary Education Bill be the first Order on Monday?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Bill will be, as I have already said, the first Order on Monday.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: What Supply will be taken on Friday?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think, probably, it will suit the convenience of the Irish Members if we take Irish Supply again on Friday.

SUPPLY. [16TH ALLOTTED DAY.]

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES, 1899-1900..

Class IV.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum not exceeding £2,450 be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, for a Grant in Aid of the Expenses of the Queen's Colleges in Ireland."

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I propose to move a reduction of this Vote, because I think that it is a great waste of public money to continue to vote sums for a system of university education in Ireland which is not acceptable to the great bulk of the people for whose use these colleges were originally set up. This Vote is an aggravation of the great grievances under which Irish Catholics have suffered so long, and while all remedies for those grievances have been set aside, Ireland is called upon, year after year, to provide funds for a system of education against which she has all along protested. The grievances of the Irish Catholics are in-

creasing as year after year passes over, and the hopes of a remedy being found, which had recently been raised much higher, are now growing weaker and weaker, and the chance of their being realised appears to grow less every day. I desire to call the attention of the Committee to the recent history of these grievances. On the 22nd of January, 1897, which is rather more than two years ago, this question was raised upon the Debate on the Address, and the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury, in the course of that Debate said :

"We have got so to contrive a university that it shall meet with the general approval of those classes of the Roman Catholic population who have refused to take advantage of the existing institutions."

That was a very strong statement, and, proceeding, in the course of his speech he went on to say that the Government required information and assurance as to the views of the Irish Catholic bishops and laity on this question. That was a direct invitation to the Irish Catholic bishops and the Catholic laity to lay before the Government their views on certain points which had been raised in the course of that discussion as points of difficulty, and in view of the character of that language which I have just quoted I think the bishops and the Catholic laity were justified in supposing that if they responded to such an invitation the Government would feel themselves under an obligation to remove those grievances. It will be within the recollection of the House that the Irish bishops on the 28th June, 1897, published a statement dealing with all the points which had been raised in the Debate on the Address in that year. I need not read that statement now, because it has already been quoted and read in full to the House, and hon. Members can find it printed in full in *Hansard*, vol. 53, page 767. I will only quote one short passage from that very important declaration of the bishops. At the conclusion of that declaration they used these words :

"These are our views, and we trust that they will be considered clear and frank enough upon the fundamental principles which, so far as we can gather, leading statesmen on all sides regard as the governing factor in the problem. Should Her Majesty's Government require any further statement from us, we shall at all times be quite ready to make it."

On the night of July 9th, 1897, the Catholic University question was again

raised on this very Vote, and in the course of the Debate the First Lord of the Treasury, referring to the declaration of the bishops of the 28th of June in that year, used the following language :

"Everybody must feel that the Roman Catholic bishops have, on this occasion, made a declaration of the utmost importance, showing that a great change has come over public opinion in Ireland on this question ; that they are not only ready, but anxious, to have a university which Roman Catholics might not only attend, but one which would harmonise generally with the views of Roman Catholics, and which would have its doors open as widely to the members of all denominations as any university in the land."

That is an extract from the speech of the First Lord of the Treasury commenting upon the declaration of the bishops, and in the course of that speech he told the Committee that he did not require any further information from the bishops, because they had declared that they were willing to clear up any other point, and therefore the Irish bishops and the Catholic laity of Ireland were entitled to assume from the speech of the First Lord of the Treasury upon that occasion that the statement of the bishops had removed all doubts or difficulties which had been indicated in the Debate at the beginning of the session from his mind, and that their assurances were thoroughly satisfactory. That was the history of this question in the year 1897, and I think it will be admitted, from the very brief outline which I have given of the year 1897, that from what occurred the Irish bishops were entitled to expect that the question would be dealt with by the Government in the coming session, because the Leader of the House of Commons would not address his invitations publicly to men like the Catholic bishops of Ireland to state their views on this great question unless he thought the Government were prepared to deal with it. I pass over the last session of Parliament, when the subject was again debated, and there was a remarkable expression of opinion not only from the First Lord of the Treasury, but from the leaders of opinion on both sides of the House. What was most remarkable in the discussion that took place on the Address was that while the leading Members of the House on all sides strongly supported the proposal to deal with the grievances of the Irish Catholics in a generous spirit, not one

single commoner or influential Member of the House of Commons during the two nights of that Debate said one single word against this policy. I pass over the remainder of last session, and I come to what occurred in connection with the Conference of Conservative Associations at Bristol. At that conference a resolution was proposed condemning the establishment of a university for the Catholics of Ireland, and after some discussion that resolution was withdrawn. There is a remarkable incident which occurred in connection with that meeting which is worthy of notice. A gentleman from the City of Cork named Hall, who professed to represent the Unionists and Protestants of Cork, protested strongly against the establishment of a university for Irish Catholics and against the policy proposed by the First Lord of the Treasury. On the 8th of December, shortly after that, another resolution was moved at the Cork Board of Guardians in favour of the establishment of a university for Irish Catholics. That was seconded by Mr. Townsend, who is a Protestant, and it was supported by several Protestant *ex officio* members of the Board, and was passed unanimously. In the course of that discussion Mr. Townsend made the following observations, which I think are worthy of being brought under the notice of the Committee. He said :

"If they put the Protestants in the position of the Catholics what would they find? Suppose in Trinity College they had twenty or thirty professors Catholics, and suppose that Mass was celebrated each day as the Protestant service was celebrated at present, would Protestant gentlemen be anxious to send their children there? He, for one, would not care to do so; and why should they ask the Catholics to do what they would not do themselves?"

That is the unchallenged language of a Protestant gentleman in Cork, and I have not heard any protest from the people of Cork against this speech of Mr. Townsend. No grosser error can be made than to suppose that you have only got to face the Catholic opinion of Ireland, for you have to face, I believe, a majority of the Protestants and Unionists of Ireland, who feel warmly in regard to the appeal which we are making that justice should be done to the Catholics of Ireland. They support this appeal because they honestly believe that there is a grievance, and secondly because they are convinced of what is unquestionably true, that apart

altogether from religious feelings they recognise that the cause of the Catholics in educational matters is inextricably bound up with their own, and they desire to see that their Catholic fellow-countrymen are better educated than they are at present, and they also recognise that the only means which can be adopted to effect this great object is the establishment of a Catholic University. The next incident in the curious history of this question is the speech of the Lord Lieutenant made in Belfast on the 18th of October, 1898, which excited a great deal of interest. The Lord Lieutenant went to Belfast to lay the foundation-stone of the new City Hall, and at a banquet which was subsequently held he used these words: For many years he had sympathised entirely with the views of the First Lord of the Treasury on the question of a university for Irish Catholics. The Lord Lieutenant said :

"I cannot hope immediately to receive any support for that view; but the First Lord of the Treasury explained in his speech in the House of Commons that nothing but the education of his Party could possibly bring his ideas to perfection. But, as I have said, I am entitled to stand here and say that if that Party can be so educated, and if any of you gentlemen can come to change your minds on that subject, or come to look on it from a more patriotic point of view, and, if I might say so, with more toleration and more sympathy, a way may be found out of the difficulty which, depend upon it, will remain a difficulty and a grievance as long as this country lasts."

That language created a good deal of excitement and doubt in the minds of the Irish people, because they saw in that speech an indefinite postponement of the settlement of the question, while others thought that the Lord Lieutenant had boldly taken up his stand in favour of a settlement of the question by declaring that he was a strong supporter of the establishment of a Catholic University, and sympathised with the views of the First Lord of the Treasury. But there was this great ambiguity, which undoubtedly did excite a good deal of uneasiness in the minds of many of the Catholics in Ireland, that he not only spoke of the necessity of educating the Tory Party on this question, but he said also :

"If any of you gentlemen can come to change your minds on that subject, or come to look on it from a more patriotic point of view, and with more toleration, and with more

sympathy, a way may be found out of the difficulty."

That was introducing a condition which, so far from indicating any progress, seemed to indicate an indefinite postponement of the question. I do not know myself what is the correct interpretation to put upon that language. I now come to what is infinitely more important—indeed, I think, it is the most important event in the history of the university question in Ireland since it was last discussed in this House. I allude to the letter written to Mr. Orrell by the First Lord of the Treasury on the 23rd of January last. In referring to that letter there are two preliminary points in connection with it which I feel bound to allude to. First of all, while, in common with all Irish Catholics, I admire the courage of the First Lord of the Treasury in publishing that letter and making the speech in which he subsequently defended it before his constituents, I do not think that, as a member of a powerful Government, responsible for the government of Ireland, he was entitled to take up the position that a reform in the university system of Ireland is demanded by the most vital interests of the people of that country—by the overwhelming majority of the people—and that in his own judgment it is expedient and just that it should be granted, and nevertheless go on to say:

"The question divides opinion so deeply, yet so little in conformity with ordinary Party distinctions, that it cannot be treated with ordinary Party methods, nor its development furthered by the ordinary Party organisation."

These words filled me with consternation, because in this language there is no limit of time, and I confess that there seems to be no hope of this question being settled on satisfactory lines unless some great Party in this House does take it up and push it forward with all the strength of Party organisation, getting what support they can from the other side of the House, or unless the Government definitely declare that they are unable to settle the question, and themselves remit it to some body in Ireland for settlement. I think that this dictum, coming from so high an authority, is a curious illustration of the evils Ireland is subject to by being governed by this Parliament. I confess that it is my conviction that, after the strong feeling expressed

by all the leaders of public opinion in Ireland, it is the duty of the Government to undertake to find a solution of this problem without delay, and they are bound to deal with this question. The second point in that letter which strikes me is that the First Lord of the Treasury distinctly went a step further in laying down conditions than he had ever gone in his previous declarations or than had been taken up in any of the prominent speeches in the Debate on the Address in 1898, when he said:

"No public endowment would be given to chairs in philosophy, theology, or modern history."

We all agreed that no public endowment should be given for any chair in theology, or for the teaching of any religious opinion in a public university, but to say that there should be no chair given in philosophy and modern history is a different matter. Speaking on my own responsibility I see no insuperable difficulty in the way of this proposal, unreasonable as it may appear, provided always that the endowment for the Irish Catholic University should be such as to place it on a footing of equality with the institutions intended for the benefit of Protestants. There is one other point to which I must allude in that letter, for it marks a great and important epoch in the history of this controversy and this question. The First Lord of the Treasury made it a prominent condition in his letter, and we all recognise that this is one of the most knotty and difficult questions. He said:

"Professors would have a right of appeal against dismissal, and the number of clergy on the governing body would be strictly limited."

Those were the conditions mentioned by him as essential for the carrying out of this question. This subject of the tenure of professors is one of the greatest importance, because it is manifest to everybody that some machinery must exist for removing a professor who persistently sets at defiance the principles of decency or morality, or who becomes utterly unfitted for his duty. Upon this point I refer with confidence to the declaration of the bishops to which I have alluded. They dealt with this very point at the invitation of the right hon. Gentleman, and they said:

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"We think that both conditions—namely, absolute security for the interest of faith and morals in the university, and, at the same time, all reasonable protection for the professor—may be met by submitting such questions to the decision of a strong and well-chosen board of visitors in whose independence and judicial character all parties would have confidence."

That is the proposal to meet the difficulty. It is hard to imagine how the bishops could be asked or expected even by the most zealous opponent to go beyond this; and I fancy that in dealing with this most difficult question of the security of tenure of professors in a university the machinery indicated in the resolution of the bishops is that which is best adapted to work satisfactorily in any great university, apart altogether from religious considerations. It is manifest that, putting aside religious differences, cases must arise when, in view of persistent breach of fundamental and universally recognised principles of morality and public decency, some means must be available for the removal of professors, and it appears to me that in this resolution of the bishops is to be found a perfectly satisfactory way of dealing with this difficulty—the question of the composition of the board of visitors being a question of adjustment and detail, and the bishops say specifically that the board of visitors ought to be a strong board of such a character as would satisfy everybody concerned. I lay special emphasis on this question, because I know it is one of the difficult questions which have, in the minds of men honestly anxious to remove our grievances, given rise to much doubt and hesitation. I think in these words and in that resolution is indicated a perfectly satisfactory solution of the difficulty, and one which I find it hard to imagine that any Member of this House, whatever views may be, would find it possible to object to. It is not necessary to deal with the suggestion of the First Lord of the Treasury that a Northern university should be established in Belfast to meet the needs of Presbyterians. We have asked for justice for Catholics, and, as regards the Presbyterians of Belfast, we have no objection whatever, if they desire a university in Belfast, to the gratification of this desire. On the contrary, we should heartily welcome the suggestion, and give it our warmest support. I can assure the Presbyterians of Belfast that they

would find amongst the Irish Catholics who sit on these benches no disposition to be hostile if any plan is brought forward for the scientific development of the University of Belfast, for which such urgent appeals have been made. As regards the proposed scheme we have nothing to say, except that if it is found to meet the difficulty and to remove the grievance felt by the Northern Presbyterians, we shall give it our heartiest support, because we do not desire to deny to any considerable section of the Irish people the rights and advantages we claim for ourselves. Now, what was the reception given to the proposals contained in the remarkable letter and speech made by the First Lord of the Treasury at Manchester? I claim that there never was a more remarkably unanimous response given to a proposal on a somewhat contentious subject by the Unionist papers of this country. I have made it my business to examine a very large number of the leading newspapers of England and Scotland for the two days following the announcement of the First Lord, and I have discovered the most extraordinary unanimity of opinion in welcoming these proposals. Even such a newspaper as *The Times* is not hostile, nor are such great Liberal newspapers as the *Scotsman* and *Manchester Guardian*. I believe that the *Scotsman* and *Manchester Guardian* represent a large body of Nonconformist opinion.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): The *Scotsman* does not.

MR. DILLON: It represents an important section of Scottish Protestant opinion, which might be supposed to be hostile.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: No.

MR. DILLON: Well, at all events, it is the organ of the Liberal Unionists of Scotland. The great majority of the leading newspapers are favourable to the proposal. On Thursday, February 2nd, a large conference of Irish Catholics was held in the Mansion House, Dublin, at which several Roman Catholic bishops, a very large body of Roman Catholic priests, and a large number of laymen were present. At the conference the following resolution was unanimously passed:

"That we express our disappointment and regret that the Government have not taken

steps to settle the important and urgent question of university education for Irish Catholics."

Nothing, however, was said in the course of that conference calculated to convey the impression that the proposals of the First Lord of the Treasury at Manchester were looked upon in a critical or carping spirit by Irish Catholics. I quote from a speech delivered by Dr. Healy, the Bishop of Clonfert, the only Catholic prelate who spoke at that meeting :

"As Mr. Balfour had shown himself to be animated by a sincere and earnest desire to settle this question in a satisfactory way, so he thought that the public declarations of the Catholic bishops of Ireland afforded ample proof that they also were animated by a sincere and earnest desire to settle this question on a satisfactory basis. When there were two people anxious to meet each other and anxious, each in his own way, to go as far as he possibly could to meet the other, there was every ground for a reasonable hope that the hour of their meeting would not be long delayed."

That is the spirit in which the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman was received by the Catholics of Ireland. Now, Sir, I turn to another very remarkable fact. I said that *The Times* represents the opinion of this country which we should naturally expect to be hostile ; but in an article on the 3rd of February, commenting on the meeting in Dublin, *The Times* made use of this remarkable language :

"The practical question of the moment is whether or not the demands of the Roman Catholic Church in regard to university education in Ireland can be brought into harmony with the conditions laid down by Mr. Balfour in his letter to Mr. Orrell and in his speech in reply to the deputation on Tuesday."

That is a very remarkable declaration, because, if it means anything, it means that if the Irish Catholics can make their demands fit in with the conditions laid down by the First Lord of the Treasury the time has come when the problem ought to be dealt with. When a body of opinion so strong has been evoked by the declaration of the First Lord as to bring *The Times* to that point, I think the Irish Catholics are certainly entitled to expect that the question would be taken up in earnest. The position of the question at this stage cannot be put better than it was in a leader in the *Spectator*, which, strongly Unionist as it is, has for years consistently advocated the policy of setting up a university for Irish Catholics. Commenting on Mr. Balfour's letter and

speech on the 6th of February 1899, the *Spectator* says :

"Is the Government going to take up Mr. Balfour's Irish University scheme? That is the question, naturally enough, everyone now is asking. It is clear that the Government must come to a decision in the matter ; and on that decision we believe depend issues of far graver moment to the Unionist Party than are apparent on the surface. . . . Therefore it is with the strongest sense of the gravity of the situation that we press upon the Government the duty of taking up the matter. The Tory Orange Press is noisy, but not formidable. The Irish will be on the side of the Government, and so will be the moderate Liberals."

Now, Sir, that, in my opinion, gives a very good description of the situation at the beginning of this session. The Irish Party did not desire to press the Government to a premature decision, and certainly they did not desire to embarrass the position of the First Lord of the Treasury, who for many years had shown himself to be a very consistent friend in this respect, and they accordingly decided that they would not raise the question on the Address this year, trusting that the extraordinary circumstances of the situation would impress upon the Government the duty of attempting, without further delay, to deal with this great question. But, on Saturday, March 4th, a statement appeared in the *Standard* newspaper, bearing all the appearance of being semi-official and inspired, to the following effect :

"Though communications are still going on with reference to the question of a Roman Catholic University in Ireland, it is practically certain that nothing will be done this session. The support of the leading men on both sides might have been secured for such a scheme as was sketched by Mr. Balfour, but it has been found that it would be impossible to obtain for it the votes of the rank and file of either of the great parties."

This statement was accepted in Ireland as a kind of semi-official announcement of the Government. Mark, there is no indication or hint that any difficulty arose among the Irish Catholics, nor is there any indication or hint that any difficulty arose among the leading men in the parties in the House of Commons. On the contrary, it is stated that the support of the leading men on both sides might have been secured, but that it was impossible to get the support of the rank and file—a proposition which I very seriously doubt. Now, this statement was followed by a speech from the

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Duke of Devonshire of the most extraordinary character. Speaking to the Liberal Unionist Council on Thursday, March 16th, the Duke of Devonshire said, specially referring to Mr. Balfour's pronouncements:

"I should be extremely surprised if, during the existence of the present Government, any practical measure dealing with this subject is brought forward. I acknowledge, Gentlemen—perhaps I ought to be ashamed of so acknowledging—[the Duke has some cause]—that this is a subject to which I have not given any close study or attention. I admit that the arguments put forward by Mr. Balfour sometimes appear to be extremely difficult to answer. But the experience which I attained on the question, which now, I am sorry to say, goes back as far as 1873, when I was a member of Mr. Gladstone's Government, which proposed to deal with the question of university education in Ireland, has led me very much to doubt whether, as a measure of practical politics, it is possible either for a Liberal or a Conservative Government to make any proposals on this subject, which shall not be limited by conditions and restrictions which will fail to make it a satisfactory solution of the problem to Roman Catholic opinion. I have never looked upon the question as one of immediate practical importance."

That is a strange declaration after the statements of the First Lord of the Treasury. Now, since the letter and statement of the First Lord of the Treasury and the passage in *The Times* saying that

"the practical question of the moment is whether or not the demands of the Roman Catholic Church in regard to university education in Ireland can be brought into harmony with the conditions laid down by Mr. Balfour,"

nothing had occurred which could in the least degree justify these extraordinary pronouncements in the *Standard* and by the Duke of Devonshire. Never, I think, in the history of Parliamentary Government in this country has a Minister in the position of the First Lord of the Treasury been treated by a colleague as the First Lord is treated in this speech by the Duke of Devonshire. Over and over again, speaking with all the earnestness of deep conviction, the First Lord of the Treasury has declared that this question is one of vital importance to Ireland, and that on its capacity to settle it depends in large measure the moral claim of the British Parliament to rule Ireland. And yet we have the Duke of Devonshire declaring, at this time of day, that he has never looked upon the question as one of

immediate practical importance, and is convinced that it is impossible for any British Government to solve it in a manner satisfactory to the Irish Catholics. It must certainly make the Irish people despair of ever getting justice from this Parliament. But let me turn for a moment to another aspect of the case, which has been somewhat overlooked. I allude to the general interests of higher education in Ireland, and the mischief that is being done thereto by the unrest and uncertainty which now exist, and which are paralysing and sapping the energy of all those, even in Protestant institutions, who are responsible for higher education. In that connection I desire to draw attention to the most significant and important declaration published yesterday by the bishops of Ireland, a declaration to which I most earnestly invite the attention of our Protestant friends. For the first time the bishops have indicated that they practically despair of getting justice from this House. No wonder they despair. They say that the cries of bigotry have once more been allowed to stifle the voice of justice, and for the first time in recent years they have put forward this most important declaration, that if this question is not settled an agitation must be started to divide the revenues of Trinity College so that the whole population may avail themselves of them. I should deeply regret any such solution as that. I think it would be a misfortune to Ireland and to generations yet unborn if a settlement was to be sought by the destruction of great institutions, instead of by the building up of others which are badly wanted; but if you will deny, absolutely and doggedly, to the Catholics of Ireland any justice in this matter, you will inevitably arouse an agitation which will put Trinity College itself in danger of some great revolution. When we remember the liberal attitude of the bishops hitherto towards Trinity College, this declaration of theirs must be regarded as both significant and important. But, Sir, I do not confine my remarks to Trinity College. What is the condition of Irish university education? It is as bad as bad can be. I abstain from giving my own opinion in any detail on this question, because I am anxious to draw attention to the most remarkable letter of Dr. Hamilton, who was for many years President of Queen's

College, Belfast. What did Dr. Hamilton say in the *Belfast News-Letter* on the 9th of February last? He said:

"As regards myself, it ought to be known that so strong is my feeling as to the defective provision for university education in this country, and of the hopelessness of looking for any marked improvement until a radical change is introduced. Two years ago, in my annual report presented to Parliament upon the condition of this college, I used there much stronger words on the subject. 'I consider that I shall fail in my duty, and be untrue to my convictions did I not state in this report that in my opinion the present condition of university education in Ireland is unsatisfactory in the extreme.'"

And then he goes on to say:

"I bitterly lament the fact that for the larger part of the youth of Ireland, both in north and south, the only university available is one of the lowest type, a mere board of examiners, created for a special purpose, and never destined to be permanent. I speak of the Royal University with all due respect. I am a member of its senate, and can say that it probably does its work as well as any body of the kind could. But its cardinal principles are vicious, and the conditions under which it is obliged to work render it impossible for it to be the *alma mater* which one expects a university to be. In many ways its systems are doing serious damage to the higher education of the country."

Then he goes on to elaborate his views in the strongest language, declaring that old Queen's College should be restored and established in Belfast, and that provision should be made for the Catholics. Dr. Hamilton makes one further observation with which I will trouble the Committee, because he deals with a very important point, and one which has been frequently alluded to, and about which a difference of opinion exists. He uses this remarkable language:

"I observe that in certain quarters the idea is still being pressed forward that a better solution of the problem would be the affiliation of this College to Dublin University. This I regard as wholly utopian. I further very strongly hold the view that the policy of having only one national university is not the best policy for Ireland, or for any country."

I heartily endorse that view.

"Such a policy, indeed, is directly in the teeth of all the best modern ideas. For example, if any country in the world might be expected to be anxious to concentrate all its academic life in one or two centres it would be England, the possessor of two ancient and unrivalled seats of learning. But instead of this what do we find? Why, that, so convinced is England that this would be a mistake, that university after university has been provided—first Lon-

don, then Victoria, then Wales; and now Birmingham, under the enlightened lead of Mr. Chamberlain, is moving for another."

That is the opinion of a man in Ireland who is one of the best qualified to speak on the subject, a man who represents the academic life of Belfast, and he declares that, altogether apart from questions of religious differences, the present system is destroying and degrading the higher character of the youth of Ireland. Now, let me turn to the character of the opposition, which, I say, is based on the most narrow and bigoted opinion. So far as Ireland is concerned, it is confined to a fraction of the Protestant population. I will give a few examples of the ignorance which prevails amongst the opponents of these proposals. First of all, I will take a resolution passed at a meeting of the delegates of the South Tyrone Unionist Association. And what did they say?

"Whilst fully recognising Mr. T. W. Russell's great services on the land question and in opposing Home Rule, this meeting expresses its deep regret at his continued advocacy of a Roman Catholic University, and therefore cannot place any confidence in a Member who promises to support the expenditure of public money for the establishment of denominational education in any form."

Yet the gentlemen representing this Association had not a word to say against the hon. Member for South Tyrone when he supported the grant to denominational schools, a large proportion of which went to Catholic schools. But I will not confine myself to Ireland. I will take Scotland, the country from which the First Lord of the Treasury himself comes. I have myself received a flood of literature on this subject. In one document, which emanates from the United Presbyterian Synod's Disestablishment Committee in Edinburgh, the following paragraph occurs:

"It is unhappily obvious that the money proposed for Ireland in this matter is to confirm denominational interests, to leave Dublin University to the Episcopalians, to reconstruct the Presbyterian Colleges into a university for Presbyterians, and to found a new university for Roman Catholics. Roman Catholics have already all to themselves the Royal University, with, of course, access to Trinity and to the Queen's Colleges."

And yet it was only yesterday that the Chief Secretary for Ireland, in answer to my hon. friend the Member for Galway (Mr. Pinkerton), was obliged to admit that the Senate of the Royal University

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as now constituted, consists of 19 Protestants and only 16 Catholics. And yet this body of Presbyterians in Scotland give as a reason for opposing our demands that we have it all to ourselves in the Royal University ! It is a bad university, it is condemned by all the soundest judges in Ireland, and could never survive a total change in its constitution, even if it were governed by Catholics. What we are asking for is a good centre for university teaching. I have denied the charge before, and I deny it again, that this is the demand of a sect for a sectarian institution, because though I for my part place a very high value on the atmosphere of religion, I place a far higher value upon the atmosphere of nationalism and the independent spirit of the people, which has been abolished from our centres of learning for the last three centuries. We are a Roman Catholic people, and the university would be mainly Roman Catholic because of that fact ; but I look at it from a far wider view than that. I say it should be a university where the ancient literature and archaeology, and the ancient spirit and language of our people would not be banned and boycotted as they are to-day in every institution of the country. We want a university where the soul of Ireland can freely move and make itself heard. We ask for the masses of the Irish people a free and equal university, which shall be pervaded not only by a Roman Catholic, but by a national, atmosphere, and which shall truly represent the sentiment and the feelings of our people. We have all heard recently of men who, in pursuit of gold, have fixed their homes in a distant land—in South Africa—a catalogue of whose grievances have been set up and detailed in Blue Books. Amongst those grievances is one with regard to education. These men have gone into an alien land, and as aliens claim rights which are being supported by this Government ; but we, a Catholic people, who have inhabited our own land from time immemorial, whose forefathers inhabited the land for centuries, before you came and tried to force upon us a new religion, against which the people have been in revolt for the last 300 years, are still crying for the justice which to us is denied. You speak of the Uitlanders—an alien people in a foreign country—as being treated as helots ; but we in our own beloved country, so dear to our

hearts, have been treated as helots, and we to-day are helots in Ireland, and in vain we call for justice here.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.) : Agreeing as I do with much that has fallen from the hon. Member, I am sorry that he should, from my point of view at all events, have spoilt a good case by that kind of rhetorical exaggeration, contained in the last words of his speech, of which I have on many previous occasions had some complaint to make as a defect in the hon. Member's style. Does he seriously think that the cause of education in Ireland can be benefited by so monstrous an exaggeration as that which draws a parallel between the position of the Uitlander in the matter of education in the Transvaal and the position of the great body of the Irish people in Ireland ? We spend—I do not say more than we might or ought—but we do, in fact, spend vast sums annually in Ireland upon education in which the priests of Ireland have in a large measure the controlling voice. We do our best—as far, at all events, as primary and intermediate education are concerned—to meet the wants of the Irish people. We do so at great cost to the British taxpayer ; and is it tolerable that our conduct towards Ireland should be compared to that of the Government which compels Englishmen at the cost of Englishmen to be educated at schools where only Dutch is taught ? I leave that point, which I regret the hon. Member has introduced into his speech, and I go with satisfaction to that portion of his remarks with which I am more closely in agreement with him. I do agree with the hon. Gentleman that Ireland has in this matter of higher education a grievance, and that this House and the country ought to set themselves earnestly to work to remedy it. The hon. Member appears to think that the fact that the grievance has up to this time remained unremedied is due to the inherent, to the ineradicable, desire on the part of the great masses of Englishmen and Scotsmen not to do justice to their Irish fellow-countrymen. That is not the case. I shall have some comment to make on the views which prevail on this side of St. George's Channel on this matter, but that the cause of the difficulty under which we labour is to be found in any desire on the part of the British public not to do

what they can to help Ireland, I am sure the general tenor of the legislation of this House, however much hon. Members may object to certain parts of it, is there to disprove. If there be a grievance, as I think there is, and if this country is anxious to remedy the grievance, we naturally ask ourselves, Why is it so difficult to get this question settled once and for all? I attribute that difficulty to three causes. The first is the indifference, I will not say to higher education, but an imperfect realisation on the part of great bodies of public opinion as to how essential the highest education is to the true development of any community. That is a truth which may seem to be a commonplace to a large number of gentlemen whom I am now addressing. It is a truth which may receive verbal assent from any public meeting, either in England, Scotland, or Ireland; but it does not come home with that mark of earnest conviction to the great body of the public that an education which must necessarily be restricted relatively to a few is nevertheless an integral and essential part of all well-organised national life. I am sure if that conviction were held with that earnest faith with which I hold it—with that earnest faith with which I believe the majority of this House hold it—then there would be a consensus of opinion in all schools of thought in the country that somehow or another the wretched condition of higher education in Ireland, as far as regards a large portion of the population of that country, must be remedied without a long delay. That is the first reason. The second reason may be roughly, though not very accurately, described as the strong Protestant objection to anything which, in the opinion of the objectors, seems to promote the cause of a form of Christianity with which they do not agree, and to whose indirect effects they strongly object. I agree with the hon. Member that a great degree of this prejudice is really due to ignorance—due to an ignorance of the meaning of what we are actually doing in Ireland in the question of denominational education.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): And in England.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: And in England, too. But let us confine ourselves to Ireland, and let us consider to

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what it is this House devotes money in the way of denominational education, and without the smallest objection from any quarter. In the first place, we have a system of primary education which, by whatever name it may be called, is practically denominational education under a conscience clause. It is a system of primary education in which the priest or the parson, whichever it may be, for the most part, is the manager of the school entirely supported out of public funds. In that school, at certain periods, dogmatic teaching may take place. If we pass from the ordinary primary education and take the secondary education, Parliament annually votes or provides year after year large sums of money for purely denominational schools. If you leave that system of secondary education and go to the singular development of education known as the industrial and reformatory schools in Ireland, you have a sum of £90,000 out of £103,000 used in the form of denominational education. There is no conscience clause, none of the limitations we put on the system of education in our primary and secondary schools. It is denominational education pure and simple, and Roman Catholic denominational education pure and simple; and on that Roman Catholic denominational education we spend every year more than twice as much as would be required for the establishment of a university for Roman Catholics in Ireland. This is done without protest, without comment. Neither Anglicans nor Nonconformists in this country ever raise a word of protest against it; and yet, when the suggestion is made that, instead of dealing with the classes for whom these reformatory schools are intended, or at all events used, you should attempt to provide the highest and, in some respects, the most important form of education in that country, apparently all these passions are at once aroused. In secondary education this House tolerates, and Protestant feeling and the country tolerate, a use of public funds for denominational education which certainly never could take place in any scheme of higher or university teaching which I should ever recommend or sanction, but which takes place under the system which we have set up. I do not know whether the majority of the House are aware—I am quite sure the majority of the country are not aware—that, in fact, a good many thousands a year devoted to the Royal University of Ireland go

directly without disguise to the support of the Roman Catholic College in St. Stephen's Green, which is denominational in a sense in which no university I have ever desired to set up can be alleged to be. I confess that if you could bring home to the knowledge and imagination of the great body of my fellow Protestants in this country and in Ireland what is the actual Irish system it would seem the most absurd. The tale is so long it is almost impossible to exhaust it. There are the training colleges, which are avowedly denominational. Of those training colleges two are Roman Catholic and one is Protestant. I knew a great deal about the subject once, but the details have escaped my memory, and at the moment I cannot say with certainty whether we pay nine-tenths of the cost or the whole at the present time. We supply the buildings, and I believe, in fact, we practically cover the expenses; but, however that may be as regards a fraction, the broad case remains as I have stated, that we have got denominational primary education, denominational secondary education, the strictest form of denominational education in the industrial schools and also in our training colleges, and we have got it also, so far as the State is concerned, in the college on St. Stephen's Green. All those are supported out of public funds, and if these facts were brought home to the heart of the country the people would see that to refuse to crown the edifice by founding a university which is no more properly to be described as denominational than the Royal University is, or Queen's College, Belfast, is, is the height of ignorance. I therefore agree that ignorance is largely at the bottom of the difficulties we experience. If it be ignorance, surely there is some hope that this is a question which can be settled once and for all. Ignorance may be dispelled; prejudice may be invincible. But, where it is not so much prejudice as ignorance, I do believe that the study and persistent discussion of this question, the explanation of what actually is going on in Ireland at the present time and of what it is that Ireland wants, will, and must, have their effect on public opinion in this country, and the time must come when, by the common consent of men of all shades of opinion, we shall do for Ireland what has already been done so adequately for the rest of the United Kingdom. That is the

second difficulty which to my mind stands in the way. There remains one more, and that is the difficulty based upon the actual constitution of the kind of hybrid university which I desire to see established. The hon. Gentleman has expressed regret that, in the sketch I put forward of what such a university should be, I excluded from any share of public grant professorships of philosophy and modern history.

MR. DILLON: I did not express regret. I drew attention to it.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I will tell the hon. Gentleman why such an exclusion is absolutely necessary. It is because I do not believe that this House or this country would ever sanction the setting up of such a university for Roman Catholics in Ireland, unless there were professorial freedom secured in that university. I do not wish to trespass on any matters of controversy, but it must be well known to all hon. Gentlemen who take my interest in this question that there have been strictly Roman Catholic universities set up in certain parts of the Continent; and the machinery has worked so badly, as we think, that professorial freedom of teaching has not been secured, to the great detriment of sound learning and the great injury of those universities when compared to universities of freer growth and more natural development. I quite agree it will be very hard to expect a university of the kind I desire to see set up to tolerate a professor of philosophy or a professor of modern history who should base the whole scope of his lectures on those two subjects, so that they were an attack, covert or open, upon the cherished theological beliefs of the great mass of the students. Yet it would be perfectly legitimate to treat both philosophy and modern history in a denominational spirit, and, therefore, I feel that in regard to those chairs those who asked for aid out of public funds would be in this dilemma—either they would have to use public funds to set up professorships where there would not be absolute freedom of teaching, and that would be intolerable from an educational point of view, or we might be in a position of forcing upon the university teaching in philosophy and modern history which was practically nothing short of a direct attack upon the religious views of the students. Therefore, though I quite

agree that such professorships should be instituted, I do not think it should be on the Imperial taxpayer that those interested in the university should come for their establishment. Perhaps some of my friends may say this is too great a concession to what they would describe as Roman Catholic prejudice, and that you ought to insist that there should be professorships of philosophy and modern history, and that, when you have got them, they might teach doctrines as contrary to the theological views of the students as they might in any other establishment. Let me remind the Committee that when we set up the Queen's Colleges the most elaborate precautions were taken to prevent such a result, and therefore there is nothing novel in the views I have ventured to express on the subject of those two chairs. Leaving philosophy and modern history, we come to a class of study where, in my judgment, freedom is as absolutely necessary, and where I am not sure that it would not be freely accorded—I mean some of the scientific chairs, such as biology. I do not think that, so long as he confined himself strictly to the subject matter, the teacher of biology should be limited in his teaching. I do not think it would be right to exclude him simply because the tenor of his strictly scientific teaching did not happen to commend itself, perhaps, to certain members of the hierarchy or others interested in the direction educational efforts should take in Ireland. I, therefore, hold strongly that there ought to be every precaution taken outside the chairs of which I have spoken; freedom of teaching in this university should be the rule. I am convinced that those who really have the interests of higher education at heart must feel that the opinions I have ventured to express are really vital to the healthy growth of any university in any part of the world, and not least where that university would have to meet such rivals as Trinity College, Dublin, and the Queen's College, Belfast. Those are the three difficulties that stand in the way of the scheme. I have spoken so often on the subject that I may be absolved from anything more. But I must say one word with regard to a criticism made by the hon. Gentleman upon the position I have taken up. He said that my position was without parallel in the history of political parties in this country—meaning, I sup-

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pose, that it was without parallel that a Member of the Government should express upon a matter of public importance views to which the Government as a whole were in no sense bound. That is no novelty. It has been adopted on more than one occasion, and it must be adopted, I think, where questions of religion come in. There was a far more notable case than any which is likely to arise, or could arise, upon the subject of education in Ireland, and that was the great controversy about Roman Catholic emancipation. There was the spectacle, Parliament after Parliament, session after session, of Ministers getting up on this bench and making the most powerful speeches respectively for and against the proposal then before the House. That is, indeed, a rare spectacle in modern days, but I think it is perfectly in accordance with our best political traditions that certain questions should be left open. There remains only to be considered whether it was or was not right that I should attempt to take a leading part, or a prominent part, in this controversy without having secured the assent of my colleagues on this bench, or of the friends who sit around me, and with whom in general politics I am proud to be associated. Well, Sir, my course has not been made either easier or more pleasant by the line I have taken in this controversy, but it seems to me that if Party politicians are on every subject to be precluded from expressing an opinion, and trying to guide the forces of public opinion inside and outside this House—if they are to be precluded from doing that in every case unless they have the formal and official assent of those with whom they act in other questions—a great limitation, and, I think, a very unfortunate limitation, will be placed upon our activity. It would be easier for me to take the advice given me, as I understand, by the hon. Gentleman, and withdraw from the missionary effort, which I admit has not met with any very great measure of success up to the present time—

MR. DILLON: It is hardly fair to say that. The right hon. Gentleman misquotes what I said. What I said was unparalleled in the annals of Parliamentary Government was the action of the Duke of Devonshire, and the comment which the Duke of Devonshire made upon the right hon. Gentleman's speech. All I

said in regard to his own speech was that I thought the Government was bound, in view of what he said, to take up the question. But I said nothing in the nature of hostile criticism of the efforts which he has made in our cause, and for which I warmly thank him.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman will see that if the Government are bound to take up as a Government every question on which I express an opinion, I must ask my colleagues, before I express that opinion, whether they are prepared to take it up. That independence, which, no doubt, should be used with discretion, but which I think is very valuable outside the ordinary Party work of politics, would be entirely destroyed if any such canon of action as the hon. Gentleman desires to establish were forced upon those who sit on this bench, or on the bench opposite. I take a different view of my duty. I repeat now, as I have said persistently ever since this question came up, that until a change takes place in public opinion which has not as yet taken place this cannot be made a Government question, and when I make that assertion it must be accepted that I say exactly what I mean. I do not mean that I have some covert commission from my colleagues to sound public opinion, or to announce by a *ballon d'essai* the future policy of the Government; I say exactly what I mean. This is not a Government question, I do not see how it can be made a Government question; but I, nevertheless, shall endeavour in the future, as I have in the past, to remove one by one the difficulties in Ireland and in this country, arising possibly out of the prejudices of those whom the hon. Gentleman himself represents—arising out of the ignorance, as I think it, of those whose other views, religious and political, I share; difficulties which can be met, which time I think will enable us to meet, but which cannot as yet be met by that apparatus of Party organisation and Party machinery by which we rightly trust to carry on so much of the legislation of this country.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Belfast, West): It certainly is not for me to comment upon the view the right hon. Gentleman takes with regard to the cause he has followed, but there is a manifest in-

convenience in the plan which he has thought it his duty to adopt. I quite accept the view that he has a right to plead this cause apart from the Government to which he belongs, but I cannot see any great public advantage arising therefrom, and I do see great confusion and a considerable amount of disadvantage likely to accrue to the Party of which he is the distinguished leader. There ought certainly to be a little modification of the form of address which he reserves for those who do not agree with him; it is a little hard that the opposition which some of us conscientiously offer to this proposal should be put down to ignorance.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I certainly never suggested that in reference to the hon. Member. I was talking of the great mass of public opinion outside.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: Notwithstanding the explanation of the right hon. Gentleman, I cannot help feeling that the only excuse he made for those who oppose this proposal was a want of appreciation of the facts. I cannot altogether accept that position, and I take it the right hon. Gentleman does not deny the view of the hon. Gentleman opposite that the opposition is due to the obscurantism and ignorance of those who object to the foundation at this time of the Christian era of this particular institution. It would be exceedingly wrong, out of taste, and altogether contrary to my desire to say anything about the Roman Catholic faith as a doctrinal religion, but it is not outside the capacity or the right of Members of this House to hold and occasionally to express their view in regard to the Roman Catholic religion as a matter affecting the life of the State and the people in it, because as a matter of history the Roman Catholic religion has played and always has claimed to play a very large part in political matters. That claim has not been abandoned, and there are many who think, as I do, that we can see in the history of this country, and of all countries, very conspicuous marks of the effect of that political participation of the Roman Catholic religion in the fate and fortunes of those countries. We think we have some ground for the belief that those countries in which the Roman Catholic religion has played a prominent part in the direction of politics have been

in our view unfortunate, and we are not desirous to put ourselves in the same position. Where exactly do we stand? Some time ago the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose laid down, with regard to the university which he thought might be established in Ireland, five conditions which seemed eminently reasonable, all of which he thought were essential before we could fairly ask Parliament to sanction the foundation of such a university. I will not trouble the House with those conditions, which were very simple and obvious, but what was the result of laying down those propositions? A very eminent Roman Catholic prelate, the Bishop of Limerick, has said with regard to them:

"It must be evident to the least informed person that an institution constituted under these five conditions (of Mr. Morley's) cannot be regarded as a Catholic University in the true sense of the word. . . . In a Catholic University the authority of the Pope would be supreme, and reach directly and indirectly every part of its organisation, and pervade and inform its operations. He would grant its charter and sanction its degrees. All its intellectual life would be carried on under ecclesiastical supervision and control."

That is the definition given by the Bishop of Limerick of a real Catholic University. In connection with that I would cite one more quotation from the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury. He says:

"The first condition is that what we propose to those desiring higher education in Ireland shall be cordially accepted by them as the solution of their difficulties."

Where have we it in evidence anywhere that what is proposed by the right hon. Gentleman is accepted, or can be accepted, as the solution of the difficulties of the Roman Catholics in Ireland? He has himself said to-night that he has received no such intimation from the Roman Catholic hierarchy, and I say that no such intimation can ever be given. If they, in synod assembled, were to give us the most positive assurance that a university under these, or any other limitations would satisfy them and meet their view, I could not possibly accept that as a final solution of this matter. For this reason: If we are dealing with a man who is a trustee, we ask what is the nature of his trust. If he has absolutely no right to divest himself of the condition of that trust, but, in a moment of anxiety to please those whom he

respects or with whom he wishes to co-operate, departs from the letter of that trust, we must suppose that the time will come, if he is a right-minded man, when he will be compelled to go back to the strict words of the trust which he is administering. The trust which is administered by the Roman Catholic hierarchy is the trust which is imposed upon them by the Roman Catholic religion, and I have no hesitation in saying that no university under any such limitations as have been hinted at this evening by the right hon. Gentleman has ever been or will be regarded as a real Roman Catholic University in the view of the Roman Catholic Church. It is not to the synods of Dublin that you will go to find out what is the true doctrine upon this matter. I was interested and amused by what the right hon. Gentleman said with reference to this university. He said, "We have already endowed every form of Roman Catholic teaching in Ireland," and he cited elementary schools, reformatory schools, secondary schools, and I was astonished to hear him cite the trick by which the endowments of the Royal University have been used for the creation of the Jesuit College, which I think is an exceedingly unfortunate institution, now existing in the City of Dublin. There is this distinction to be noted. What is a university as opposed to these institutions? In the curricula of these institutions you want to include only certain subjects of study; but the very essence of a university is that it should be universal in its teaching, and embrace the latest developments of human knowledge and be, in the true sense of the word, a "university." The parallel at once ceases between any of these subsidiary organisations and a university such as we are referring to. What is this university to consist of? I really do not know what the right hon. Gentleman would dare to trust to this university when it is founded. He will take no responsibility for the chair of theology, the chair of philosophy, or, most important of all, the chair of biology. It is a most serious thing when we are founding what we call a modern university that we fear to entrust the chair of biology to the governing body of the university without taking special precautions such as have been suggested. I do not wonder that the right hon. Gentleman

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dwelt upon the necessity of taking these precautions, for it is not so very long ago since a doctor of biology was discharged from a Roman Catholic University so called, simply and solely, as far as I am aware, upon the ground that he taught what modern knowledge has enabled men to acquire with regard to the science of biology.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: What is the case?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: In the Dublin University.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Which Dublin University?

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): Will the hon. Member give us the name of the doctor?

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I think the name was Dr. Klein, in the Royal University College, Dublin.

MR. T. M. HEALY: There is not one word of foundation for the statement. I know the case, and the less said about it the better.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: You had better take care of yourself.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: If the hon. Member has any doubt about the value of my instance, I will only go to my general argument.

MR. T. M. HEALY: He was a priest who got married.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I will only call attention to the obvious danger which exists when the right hon. Gentleman has thought it absolutely necessary at this stage to lay down as an almost essential proposition that the ordinary science of biology, which is at the bottom of all medical teaching, should be safeguarded by taking it out of the hands of those who, I suppose, are to be the normal governing body—the ecclesiastical personages who are to rule this university.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think the hon. Member quite understands what I may call my scheme. No doubt the university will be under a governing

body, but there will be in this university a visiting body, to whom there will be an appeal. And certainly, no person, in my judgment, ought to be dismissed merely because he exercises on his own responsibility the liberty of teaching in that subject in which he is engaged.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: What I gathered was that there was a probability that when this question of biology came to be taught we should be faced with the difficulty which has always confronted those who desire to see this subject taught in Roman Catholic Universities, and that it may arise in the interference of the dogmatic theology of the Church, with the teaching of biology for medical purposes, which modern science has made absolutely essential. In what country in the whole civilised world has this step been taken which we are reproached and called fanatical and bigoted for not taking? In what country in the world has a Roman Catholic University, conforming to the doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church, been founded and endowed in recent years in response to the demand of the Roman Catholic hierarchy? My proposition is entirely different: it is that there was a period, not so very remote in history, when every country in Europe as a matter of course possessed an endowed, State-controlled, Roman Catholic University, but one by one every nation in Christendom has divested itself of that possession—has found such a university to be incompatible with the progress of civilisation, and has discarded it. There are survivals, I admit. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of the necessity of improving higher education. I agree. But does he wish us to imagine that the foundation of a Roman Catholic University in the centre of the community is admirably calculated to stimulate higher education? Such a view is certainly not supported by any information that I have ever received. The University at Freiburg has been referred to. That university was set up with the object of having a Roman Catholic University fully equipped going into competition with modern university instruction. It was founded by very able and competent men, and I believe it was their honest intention that that university should, as far as a university of that kind could, give as liberal an education as could be obtained. What happened?

The whole professoriate was immediately grasped by an outside body—the Dominican clergy—and all the Catholics who had been selected to teach philosophy and other modern subjects in the university found their tenure so impossible under the *régime* which was instituted that they left in a body and never returned. We are told that all sorts of precautions will be adopted to make all that sort of thing impossible in Ireland. I trust it may be so, but we who have not the same confidence that some hon. Members have would like to be told what is to be the nature of those precautions. We could never reconcile two absolutely irreconcilable things; we should never reconcile the doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church with regard to the education of the young with the view taken by the majority of the civilised world with regard to university education at the present time. We may have some compromise which will satisfy the requirements of the moment, but I have too much respect for the ability and consistency of those who are responsible for the ordering of the secular and the religious affairs of the Roman Catholic religion to suppose that they will ever go one step back upon the claims which they make now and have always made, and which I believe they always will make with regard to the education of the young. We cannot reasonably be asked to accept the charge of being illiberal when we express our belief that a university of this kind will not be in accordance with modern civilisation and modern views. I am honestly open to conviction if the First Lord of the Treasury can influence my reason and move my judgment, but I shall not budge an inch from my position until I see exactly what the proposal is to which we are asked to assent. I shall want to know how this is to be distinguished from other universities, and what are the privileges of a modern university which we are asked to forego in order that this university may be created. I shall want to know also what is the nature of the compact which is to be arrived at with the Roman Catholic hierarchy in Ireland, and I shall want to know what is the assurance we have that that compact is in full and entire satisfaction of the demands of the Roman Catholic Church, not as representing temporarily the views of the Dublin or other

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synods in Ireland, but as representing the entire body of the Roman Catholic Church as constituted in that country. When we have had an answer to these questions—and a satisfactory answer—I shall be in a more malleable frame of mind than I am at present. I do, however, protest against this matter being brought up upon a side issue in this manner in our discussion of the Irish Estimates in an empty House, because it should be the subject of a serious Debate. I quite understand the strength of the feeling on both sides, but I do think it would be a good thing for us on all sides upon this question to realise exactly where we stand, so that if this matter is to be settled we may prepare ourselves for its settlement.

SIR J. BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich): I desire to say a word or two about the allusion made by my hon. and learned friend the Member for North Louth to Dr. Klein of Liverpool. Referring to that gentleman he said "the less said about him the better," and those words were spoken in a tone to be heard all over the House. But a moment later in tones much lower, which could only be heard by those hon. Members sitting near him, he said "Dr. Klein is a Catholic priest who got married."

MR. T. M. HEALY: I said it openly to the House.

SIR J. BRUNNER: I do not wish to convey that there was any trick intended by the hon. Member's action. What I desire to do is to repeat those words so that all should hear that the fault he finds with Dr. Klein is that he was a Catholic priest who got married. It is true that Dr. Klein has been a Roman Catholic priest, and that he is to-day happily married; but he did not get married until a considerable time after he had ceased to be a Catholic priest. Dr. Klein holds to-day a very honourable position, and I should be absolutely disloyal if I did not repudiate the insinuations made by the hon. Member for North Louth in regard to that gentleman.

MR. T. M. HEALY: The hon. Gentleman the Member for West Belfast gave an instance of a Roman Catholic college which he was pleased to call the Dublin

University, where a teacher of biology was discharged on the ground that he taught what modern learning had taught in regard to the science of biology, and he has trotted out Dr. Klein as a victim of Roman Catholic persecution. In regard to that matter I did say that in my judgment the least said about Dr. Klein the better either upon that or any other subject. [AN HON. MEMBER: "Why?"] Well, I should not think it fair without notice to the gentleman to discuss here the case and history of Dr. Klein; but if it should ever be desirable to do so, in defence of the action of the Dublin University College, I should be prepared to defend that action, for there is not a shred of foundation for the statement made by the hon. Member for West Belfast. I should like to put this question to any hon. Gentleman present—if you were a Catholic sending your children to a college and there they were being taught by a priest, and you found that instead of teaching the Catholic tenets in reference to the celibacy of the priesthood, that priest had broken his vows and married the young lady of the family to which he had been appointed tutor. I do think it is rather hard to say that he was dismissed from his position because of his teaching of biology. I do not think that Dr. Klein was ever dismissed, and my recollection of it is that he alleged conscientious scruples, and became a Unitarian minister in Liverpool. I have often noticed that in connection with every priest who leaves the Roman Catholic Church there is always a woman at the bottom of it. The lady comes first, and the conscientious scruples of the priest in regard to his faith come afterwards. I have not introduced this subject as an attack upon Dr. Klein, but whenever it is made a charge against the Catholic Church that he was dismissed upon other grounds it will be my business when that case arises to discuss the entire facts of the case. In this instance I only rose for the purpose of making that correction. I do not intend at this moment to enter into the general topic; but when a gentleman makes a charge against a Catholic college, which is to be used as an argument not only against the Catholic faith but also against the rights of the Catholics in regard to education, I say that we have a right to have the whole facts of the case probed, and if it turns out that there is a

painful story attached to it then it is not our fault. What I say is that the whole matter illustrates the readiness with which hon. Gentlemen are willing to believe the worst of those who differ from them either in politics or religion. I have often heard and read the speeches of the hon. Member for West Belfast, and I have sometimes speculated as to what would have happened if he had been born a Catholic, as to how many persons he would have burned at the stake—especially if, besides his belief in the infallibility of the Pope, he had also added the belief in his own infallibility. I can only ask now that he will give us some measure of the pity of his heart for those who have had the terrible misfortune to be born in the depths of superstition which attach to being a Catholic. We all appreciate the toleration with which Protestant nations treat the humbler nations, whether at Omdurman or Majuba Hill. I should like to say one or two words upon the more immediate subject. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury used some very remarkable language, and I agree with everything the hon. Member for East Mayo said with regard to the fairness, ability, and frankness with which the First Lord of the Treasury has addressed himself to this question. But the right hon. Gentleman to-night has used words of hopelessness and despair the like of which I have not heard him use before in connection with this question. He said two things; firstly, "It is not a Government question," and secondly, "I do not see how it can be made a Government question."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As far as I remember, I said that I did not see how it could be made a Government question until there was a change in public opinion, which change has not yet taken place.

MR. T. M. HEALY: That is a dictum which does not appear to me to be very encouraging, and I do not know that it carries us much further. As far as the life of this Parliament is concerned, the right hon. Gentleman says it is not a question within the range of practical politics, and he does not see how it can be made a Government question. Is it for the Catholic bishops of Ireland to show how it can be made a Government question? Whether in this House or out of it, I have always held the view that until the Irish

Catholic bishops are prepared to make themselves inconvenient to the Government in Ireland this will never be made a Government question. The Catholic bishops in Ireland are some of them of extrememoderationinpolitics, but all of them will read with very considerable emotion the statement of the right hon. Gentleman that he does not see how this is to be made a Government question. Sir, we have again and again brought forward the question in this House, and time after time we have been met by accents of despair; but in no speech that has ever been made by the right hon. Gentleman have we ever heard such a statement from the Government, coupled and preceded by this statement, which I also took down, "that this House ought to earnestly set itself to work out a remedy for the grievance." This has not been made a Government question, because it is considered not to be of sufficient importance. There are other matters which have been made Government questions, such as questions like the Undersized Fish Bill, and that measure is of sufficient importance to become a Government question, and it has actually got a Select Committee appointed to deal with it; but the question of the stunted education of the Irish Catholics is considered altogether unworthy to be made a Government question. That reduces this House, so far as Irishmen are concerned, to a position of absolute absurdity. Only to-day Ireland was refused a little railway 36 miles long, which was supported unanimously by 46 public bodies in Ireland, and which the majority of the Irish Members had petitioned in favour of. We cannot even have a little railway in Ireland, because it cannot be made a Government question, and there is no means of making it a Government question. To-night we are told, upon the question of nniversity education for Ireland, that it is of far less importance than the question of undersized fish. What is the inevitable conclusion that Irishmen of all grades of opinion will come to after such treatment? Only yesterday, without notice, the right hon. Gentleman connected with the War Department—and his success in that Department I certainly look upon with great satisfaction—introduced a Bill for £4,000,000 for extra military works. The question of founding a Roman Catholic University involves only about £1,000,000, or the price of one battleship. That Bill to spend

£4,000,000 upon ranges and a few things of that kind passes this House without a word, and nobody asks even for the details of it. The hon. Member for West Belfast is going to ask for the details as to the expenditure of this £1,000,000, although we are to vote the £4,000,000 for works in Wei-hai-wei, Hong-kong, and Zululand, and now there is to be an Antarctic expedition, and Ireland is to pay her share of that. The First Lord of the Treasury has also announced that some substantial sum is to be voted to spread civilisation in Victoria Land, and for all these things the Irish Catholics are to see Irish money voted, while the things that are dearest to their hearts are to be treated in this House with contempt, and sneering references to their faith and to their nation by gentlemen in the position of the hon. Member for West Belfast. How is it possible to tolerate treatment of that kind? If Government is to be a thing done with the consent of the governed, the logical outcome of government of that kind on the part of the people whose feelings either in religion or any other matter are outraged is to throw bombs. I see no other course. You wonder at the want of loyalty on the part of the Irish people, and their want of affection for the English nation—and I may add want of affection for the hon. Member for West Belfast, who is, after all, a born Briton; and we are supposed to be able to take to our bosom the nation of which he is the representative, although he thinks no more of crushing the views and sentiments of four millions of Irish Catholics than if he were to walk on a cockroach going through the hall. Why does the hon Member for West Belfast not go and preach to the soldiers and sailors and tell them that they are idolaters? Why do you come and take idolatrous taxes from me? The next time the British tax collector calls I will plead to him that I am an idolater. But this question really has not only merely a sentimental side, but it has also a practical side. The hon. Gentleman the Member for West Belfast is willing to vote for money for an educational institution which has no pupils, for that is according to the British model. That is the Lion and Unicorn wisdom and the Union Jack statesmanship. I put this point to the hon Member. Surely it is better that the Irish Catholics should have the

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teaching even of an obscurantist professor than none at all; and yet that is the alternative which is placed before them if this just demand is refused. The hon. Gentleman read out a statement to the effect that the Catholic university should have the approval of the Pope. For my own part I would rather be in a university that had the approval of the Pope than the approval of the hon. Member for West Belfast, because from all I have read about him and heard from the hon. Gentleman I do think that the opinion of the Pope on this matter is preferable to his own. As I understand it, we are asking nothing from you at all, for we are asking only for a share of our own money to be distributed amongst ourselves in our own way, and if you are unable to give it to us, then your system of government in Ireland is doomed. You tell us that all the high positions in the Army, the Navy, the Volunteers, and other Government Departments, are open to us, but at the same time you keep the Irish people in a condition of educational servitude, with the result that the children of the Irish people are unfitted to pass the degrees required for any one of the prizes in connection with those splendid institutions of your Empire. What is this but another form of penal laws? Such laws are fair and frank, and they are, as a matter of fact, far franker than the hypocritical state of things which now exists. Take the case of men at my time of life who have to begin to consider what to do with their children. They have to part with their religion and give up the creed in which they were reared, and to which their fathers belonged, if they desire to compete for these great national prizes. They have either to do that, or else allow their children to be condemned to remain in that ignorance which the hon. Gentleman opposite contends for. It may be a terrible state of mental degradation upon our parts that we prefer our children to be brought up in ignorance rather than they should go to institutions where their faith will be attacked; but surely it ought to be a problem of statesmanship to give the Roman Catholics a chance of education, not in religion or philosophy, but in other higher subjects, which would enable them to gain some of those worldly prizes to which you admit they are entitled, without, at the same time, doing any violence to their religious feelings. That is one

of the problems to be solved by English statesmanship. You have solved this question for the French in Canada, and why not try to solve it for the Irish in Ireland? I should like to know what the Canadian French have done for you. Is it because of their race, for they do not pay a shilling of taxes to the Empire, and they protect themselves against your imports coming into Canada. You cannot send any of your goods from Birmingham or Sheffield without the French put a tax upon them. And yet Ireland is not to be allowed to have the poor satisfaction of being voted the £1,000,000, which is all that is required for the solution of this great question. From the English financial point of view this is not a great question, for it is a very moderate question—for what is £1,000,000 to you when you squander £100,000,000 every year? It will only take the price of a single battleship in order to bring about this great satisfaction to the feelings of four millions of people. Just because you differ from us upon certain forms in religion, are our children to be condemned to ignorance? What has the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury just done? He has brought in a Bill, which is to be read a second time on Tuesday next, dealing with the tithe rent-charge, which is to enable the clergy of England to get something like £80,000 or £90,000 a year in relief of their taxes. Now, we Irish Catholics will have to contribute our share to that. ["No, no."] Well, I have my own suspicions about your system of book-keeping. You won't allow us to keep the purse or examine the books, and I have a very strong suspicion that your calculations include us in your charges. You make no bones about this grant to the clergy, who have already large salaries, and who belong to the richest Church in the world, and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Belfast will have no hesitation in voting for that Bill on Tuesday next. Let the right hon. Member try to abolish the Divinity School in Trinity College, and he will very quickly get his answer from the Protestant party. So long as you maintain the essentially Protestant character of Trinity College, I say that it is a monstrous thing to pretend that we can have equality or freedom in our educational establishments, or that there is anything like justice in asking us

to send our children to a college where the Divinity School is kept up and where the essence of its teaching is that the Catholic faith is essentially a superstition.

*MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): I regret that the hon. Member for North Louth is not in his place, as I wish to make a few remarks—I gave him notice of my intention to do so—in regard to one passage in his speech of which I am bound to take cognisance. I cannot but believe that the hon. Member will, on reflection, regret that he was betrayed into a personal attack, and I must say, a series of personal insinuations, against a man so much beloved and respected in Liverpool by many of my personal friends, and whose case was referred to by my hon. friend the hon. Member for West Belfast. The name of Dr. Klein was deliberately demanded from the hon. Member for Belfast, with, I must say, some discourtesy and more than usual Parliamentary persistence. I think it my duty to say that only within the last few days I have had assurances from Liverpool friends, one of whom formerly held a seat in this House for many years, of the high esteem and warm regard in which Dr. Klein is held in Liverpool. I am sure I am right in repudiating on their behalf in the strongest possible terms of condemnation the insinuations against the character of that gentleman because he had divested himself of the position of a Roman Catholic priest, and because he had married a lady to whom he was attached, and also because he had come to hold other views than those he had formerly held. I have thought it my duty to say so much, and to condemn emphatically the attack made on a man worthy of the respect of everyone in the country and in this House. The hon. Member for North Louth has achieved many brilliant successes in this House, but he has never achieved a more conspicuous success than in showing how impossible it is to establish a Catholic University in Ireland. He has exhibited a spirit of intolerance in making these insinuations without proof or warrant, and if we unfortunately assent to the creation of a Roman Catholic University in Ireland, we see the spirit to which the professors in that university would be exposed, and it seems to me a lamentable——

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MR. PINKERTON (Galway): What has this to do with the Queen's College Vote now before the Committee?

*THE CHAIRMAN: I think it is well that this incident should close. I understand that it has been fully discussed, and it does appear to me very remote from the Vote under discussion.

MR. CHANNING: The question under discussion is the advisability of the creation of a Roman Catholic University in Ireland. I was alluding to the remarks of the hon. Member for North Louth as showing the sort of temper to which the occupants of the chairs of the university to be created would be treated, and before the hon. Member for Galway raised his point of Order I was about to make the remark that this gentleman, Dr. Klein, was engaged as a teacher of biology in the Catholic University College of Dublin, and that the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for North Louth seemed to think that the University College should get rid of him because——

MR. ARTHUR J. MOORE (London-derry): I object, Mr. Grant Lawson, to the hon. Member for East Northamptonshire persistently evading your ruling.

*THE CHAIRMAN: I understand that the hon. Member only wishes to finish the sentence in which he was interrupted, and then to go on with a new point.

MR. CHANNING: I was entitled to use an illustration in this House as to the state to which the professors of a Roman Catholic University would be reduced by the governing body of such a university. One remarkable interruption made by the right hon. the First Lord of the Treasury to the hon. Member for West Belfast was singularly significant. The professoriate that was contemplated by the right hon. Gentleman in the scheme which he has laid before the country, as I understood it before he interrupted the hon. Member for West Belfast, was that theology, modern history, and philosophy are to be excluded from the control of the governing body of the Catholic University. But now the right hon. Gentleman apparently gives the House to understand that these professors would be absolutely responsible to the governing body, and that the only

remedy, in case the governing body dealt with the professors in the spirit to which I have alluded, in the case of Dr. Klein, would be an appeal to the visitors to the university. Now I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the professors of science, history, and philosophy, to be appointed by the Crown, are to be so appointed on the ground of their qualifications to teach these subjects, or whether his proposal would be to endeavour to meet the views of the Roman Catholics in Ireland by introducing the question of religion in the appointment of these chairs. That is the essential point. Although I absolutely dissent from the view taken of this question by the right hon. Gentleman, I wish to say that I honour him for the courage with which he has put his views before the country, and for the claim to complete independence of view with which he has asserted to-night in putting the matter before the House. His views, I think, have fortunately been overruled by his colleagues in the Cabinet, as they have been on the question of silver and on the question of woman's suffrage. His colleagues have been wise, I think, in rejecting these views. As an old university reformer I have always been against religious tests and sectarianism in all its forms. So far as I understand the argument of the First Lord of the Treasury, it amounted to this, that as there is so much denominationalism in Ireland at present, in the primary schools, reformatories, and secondary schools, we ought not to criticise too closely a suggestion that we should have a great deal more denominationalism. I absolutely dissent from that point of view and from the facts. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Montrose, when responsible for Irish affairs, persistently refused to consent to the new rules suggested by the National Education Commissioners, which would, in practice, have turned the Irish educational system into a denominational system. I do not understand that the First Lord of the Treasury, or the present Chief Secretary for Ireland, or the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, or the Solicitor-General for Ireland, have agreed to the changes in the rules as suggested by the National Education Commissioners; and therefore in Ireland we have now, in principle, the separation of religious teaching and the union of secular teaching in the schools of Ireland. Therefore we are still in the position of having

rejected the compromise suggested by the Powys Commission some years ago. The argument of the hon. and learned Member for Louth is that the Roman Catholic youth in Ireland are denied a fair chance of education. I absolutely deny that. The hon. Member for East Mayo, with many parts of whose speech I was much more in sympathy, said that the only university open to Catholics in any sense whatever was Trinity College, but that the Divinity School and the other branches were so permeated by a Protestant atmosphere as to make it impossible for Catholics in Ireland to send their sons to that splendid college and avail themselves of its privileges and advantages. I absolutely challenge the whole of that statement from beginning to end. So far as I understand the constitution of Trinity College, it is practically the same as that of Oxford and Cambridge. Catholics are perfectly free to go to Trinity; no tests are imposed upon them, and they are not required to attend any religious ceremony. It is perfectly notorious that Catholic students who attend Oxford and Cambridge return to their families just as good Catholics as they went. I happen to know the arrangements at Oxford, and to know also the Catholic Canon who is appointed there to look after the interests of the Catholic students; and it is perfectly impossible to assert that these Catholic students are placed in any position of disadvantage whatever. They have the glorious privileges of a great university; they acquire a breadth of mind by mixing with other students; they are not cramped in their ideas; they are brought in contact with men of other conceptions, and that is the best way of making men of them, men of broad sympathies. I say where that is the case it is absurd to allege that the sons of Catholic parents cannot obtain the fullest advantages of university training, and yet remain loyal to their religious opinions. My main objection to sectarianism in university teaching would apply just as strongly to an Episcopalian, a Unitarian, or an Agnostic University. I do not want to see any of these dogmatic principles put ahead of education itself. I say it is a monstrous thing that we should judge professors from the point of view of their being either Catholic or Protestant. They ought to be judged from the point of view of whether they are the very best

men that can be obtained to teach the subjects they are called upon to teach. We have seen the temper of the hon. Member for North Louth, and the sort of spirit in which the professors in a Catholic university would be selected and treated if that sort of spirit was applied to the working of a Catholic University in Ireland. We should have a sort of *Index Expurgatorius*, and any man who ventured to have an opinion of his own would not be judged as to whether he was the best man for a chair of biology, or geology, or chemistry, classics, or history, but whether he was up to the shibboleths of the Catholic hierarchy. It is this that I wish to protest against. The hon. Member for Mayo complained that there was not better provision for the higher education of Catholics in Ireland, and that the Queen's Colleges were poor. What is the reason they are poor? Why do not the Irish Catholics send their sons, with their young, and strong, and vigorous intellects, to fill these colleges and thus develop them? That would be better for the colleges, and better for the young men, too, to be brought in contact with others and learn to take broad and generous views. It is because of the bigotry and narrowness and tyranny of the Roman Catholic priesthood. It is because of the bigotry and narrowness and tyranny of the priesthood, which deny the right of the parents to send their sons to these Queen's Colleges. It is because these colleges have been denied pupils that they are not as fully developed as we would like to see them. I, for one, insist on having freedom, and on having the teaching institutions divested of religious bigotry and tyranny, and that is the spirit in which we should approach the university question for Ireland.

MR. RENTOUL (Down, E.): After the manner in which the First Lord of the Treasury has described his own followers in Ulster, I naturally speak with considerable pain, because we were described as densely ignorant and grossly prejudiced. Well, the right hon. Gentleman cheered that, and I merely want to define at the very start the position in which I stand. There are a certain number of people in Ireland who entertain strong views on this matter of university education, entirely apart from political or religious prejudices. I shall try to state what these views are, and

why these views are held. The First Lord has referred to those who opposed a Catholic University as ignorant or prejudiced. Well, the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church has been frequently referred to to-night, and, I think, with entire respect. I beg to refer to the governing body and clergy of the Church to which I belong, namely, the Presbyterian Church of Ireland. The General Assembly of the Church is, as far as I know, to a single man, strongly opposed to the Catholic University scheme, and in favour of the principle of mixed education. If there is one man who is not so, he has not come out in public and made his views known. That assembly is not ignorant, if university degrees are any test of education, for about nine-tenths of the ministers of the General Assembly hold university degrees, and a very large number of them with very high honours and university distinction. Therefore, they are not incapable of forming a good strong opinion on any university question; and, with the utmost respect for the First Lord of the Treasury, they are quite as capable of forming an opinion on a matter of this sort as the right hon. Gentleman himself. They have formed their opinion, and have stated it again and again. What is the reason they are attached to undenominational education? Is it believed by any gentleman opposite that they take the line they do simply to spite the Roman Catholics? Do these gentlemen remember the old days of struggle, when, throughout the whole of Ulster, and, indeed, throughout the whole of Ireland, Presbyterian ministers and Catholic priests were side by side fighting the same battle? Do they forget that in all reforms called for by the Roman Catholics in Ireland they found their backers very generally, and very strongly, amongst the ministers of the Presbyterian Church? These Presbyterian ministers take the stand they do because they believe that a mixed education is best for the social life of Ireland. They may be entirely wrong, but that is their firm conviction, and the firm conviction of all of us who have gone through a mixed education. It so happens, if I may be permitted to say so, that I was educated in three different schools, colleges, and universities, and I believe that I never had a single class in school, college, or university in which there were not Roman Catholic students amongst my best and most

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efficient class-mates. What dreadful and diabolical injury I did to them I cannot say ; but I can assure the House that they did me no harm whatever. I think, in fact, they did me one good, and that is, if I can judge myself at all, that they rendered me incapable of any bigoted dislike to any man for continuing in the religion in which he happened to be born. I emphasise the word "happened." That being so, I am one of those who look on a mixed education as very beneficial. We are extremely sorry that we are not able to see eye to eye on this question with a large number of our fellow-countrymen, but we wish to ask them to give us as much credit for honesty of purpose and intelligence, and a desire to do what we believe to be right, as we give them. In this matter of university education we frankly say we will beat them if we can, and if they are successful we shall take our beating as best we can. Believing as we do, however, that mixing with those of other denominations in schools and colleges and examination halls, instead of being injurious, is beneficial to the whole of us, that is one of the reasons why we adhere to the present system. I have already referred to the First Lord of the Treasury. Everybody gives him the highest credit for sincerity of conviction and honesty of purpose in this matter, but we desire similar credit at the same time. Some of us, moreover, think we know Ireland quite as well as the First Lord of the Treasury, but we do not wish in the slightest degree to attribute a feeling of prejudice to him for the line he has taken. We only admire him for the fact that what he does he does with all his force, whether he happens to be on the right side or the wrong side. The first speech to-night was that of the hon. Member for East Mayo. It was a most gratifying speech. There has not been a speech for a long time which has done more service to the side which I advocate than that, because the hon. Member put his points quite clearly and let us see exactly where he stood. He told us, in the first place, that it was not merely a Catholic university that he wanted, but a national university. Secondly, he plainly put before us that he means a university entirely in sympathy with himself, not merely in religion, but in politics and everything else. Therefore he was frank and clear in expressing the hope that one of the

political parties alone should have a university of its own religion and of its own political creed. Then he went on to say that he would deplore any hand being laid on Trinity College, Dublin, or on Dublin University. In that respect he is turning his back on Archbishop Walsh, for that reverend prelate has said that no university would satisfy Catholic demands so long as Trinity College in Dublin remains untouched. I think the Archbishop is perfectly right. If you endow a university with a million a year it would not equal Dublin University, nor have the same life, standing, and dignity for 100 years to come. That being so, to leave Dublin University to one small section of the community, with all its history and all its prestige, and to start a gingerbread university, no matter to whom it belonged, would be no fair play to those who claim to be a large proportion of the inhabitants of Ireland. Therefore, no settlement of the Irish University question is possible unless a hand is laid on Trinity College, unless the divinity school and the theological professorships are removed, and the place made in every respect equal for all the people of Ireland. One thing is generally lost sight of by hon. Gentlemen opposite, who undoubtedly have the interests of the rising generation of Ireland at heart, and that is the value of these degrees if you get a university. In Ireland they may be valuable enough, but the case is different when you come to England or Scotland. Even the *ad eundem* degree of Durham University is not acknowledged as equal to the same degree at Oxford or Cambridge, and the holder of that degree from the Royal University in Dublin would be looked upon with scorn and contempt in England. Upon one point an erroneous idea has got abroad. It is said that if a university is granted to the Roman Catholics, the Presbyterians would be satisfied with Dublin University. I can assure the House, in the name of the Presbyterians of Ireland, that they would have nothing whatever to do with Dublin University or Trinity College as it is constituted now. We would immeasurably rather send our young people to the new Catholic university than to Dublin University.

MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): No, no.

MR. RENTOUL: The hon. Member for South Belfast says "No."

MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON: I say it is nonsense.

MR. RENTOUL: The hon. Member makes that statement with a want of caution which is characteristic of him, and I entirely deny his right to give an opinion on this question.

MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON: Go to Belfast and say it.

MR. RENTOUL: The hon. Member says, "Go to Belfast and say it." I say it in the face of Belfast now. I say that the hon. Member for South Belfast is a Dublin University man, and is not a member of the Presbyterian Church. On that account he is not the man to give an opinion, even though he may be returned for a division in which there are a large number of Presbyterians. I am speaking for those for whom I have authority to speak, and I say that if a university is granted to the Roman Catholics of Ireland it would be absolutely necessary for the Presbyterians to have a university, not under that name, but a Northern university under the name of a Belfast or Ulster University. ("No.") The Member for North Belfast or the Member for South Belfast may make any statements they like. I have made my statement, and that statement I stand by.

MR. PINKERTON: The hon. and learned Member who has just sat down said that the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church declared against denominational education. That is absolutely true. But I ask him to contrast their teaching with their practice. It is a well-known fact that in every school in the North of Ireland they insist on their teachers being in full accord with their religious views. I agree with the First Lord of the Treasury that we are fighting against what is practically an accomplished fact in Ireland. We have denominational education in every corner of it. The First Lord of the Treasury also spoke of rhetorical exaggeration, and when I contrasted the speech of the hon. Member for East Mayo with that of the hon. Member for West Belfast, I could not help thinking that all the rhetorical exaggerations could be traced to the

speech of that gentleman. The First Lord said that an imperfect realisation of the benefits of higher education was one of the drawbacks in Ireland. Now, there is no city in Ireland where the imperfect realisation of the benefits of higher education is more evident than in the City of Belfast. If you go to the Queen's College, Belfast, you will find the students all representing the wealthy middle classes. They are all drawn from the agricultural districts, while it is notorious that all the money-grubbers of Belfast, the moment their sons obtain a certain amount of knowledge, pitchfork them into their offices, and never dream of sending them to the Queen's College. The hon. Member for West Belfast spoke about the prejudicial influence of Catholicism and the broadening influence of Protestantism. The broadening influence was so well illustrated by the Belfast Members a few days ago that the hon. Gentleman should have been ashamed to mention Catholicism in the same breath. I wish to draw the attention of the Committee to the condition of the Queen's Colleges in Ireland. Owing to the policy that has been adopted, each student in Queen's College, Galway, costs the Government £369 14s. 2d. a year, as compared with about £24 for each student in the Queen's College, Belfast. The derelict condition of Queen's College, Galway, is due to the failure of successive Governments to redeem the pledges they have made. In 1888 I put a question to the then Chief Secretary for Ireland dealing with the position of Catholic professors in the Queen's College, Galway, and I asked whether it was not the fact that Sir Robert Peel, when the colleges were founded, gave a distinct pledge, that so far as was in his power Catholic professors would be appointed to the colleges of Cork and Galway. The First Lord of the Treasury, who was then Chief Secretary for Ireland, replied in the affirmative. I put a further question to the present Chief Secretary on the subject yesterday. But what has happened? The senior Catholic professor at Queen's College, Galway, who is senior for promotion, has been recently passed over, and a Protestant, junior by many years, is appointed. Dealing with the contention of Sir Robert Peel that the best men should be appointed, I will take the liberty of reading a testimonial

in favour of the senior Catholic professor from Professor Moffett. He said :

" Doctor Pye needs no testimony from me of his professional ability, which is well and widely known ; but having known him from the time he was a first year's student of this College up to the present when he has been for 14 years an esteemed professor, I gladly take the opportunity of stating, from intimate knowledge of his character, that it would be impossible to speak too highly of his integrity, his conscientiousness, and his devotion to his duties."

Instead of recognising the claims of the senior professor, the Government have yielded in the most abject fashion to the pressure of the brand-new association which has been started in the North of Ireland. And I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that so far from the senior professor having taken part in political contests he has never made a political speech in his life.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. G. W. BALFOUR, Leeds, Central) : I may say that neither religious nor political views have anything to do with these appointments.

MR. PINKERTON : Then I am sorry the right hon. Gentleman has not acted up to the professions of Sir Robert Peel.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR : May I ask the hon. Gentleman to give the reference in *Hansard* where Sir Robert Peel made that statement ?

MR. PINKERTON : The last time this matter was mentioned the First Lord of the Treasury pointed to the fact that Mr. Starkey, a Catholic, had been appointed ; but this House must remember that Mr. Starkey was only appointed for nine months. What I so much object to is the sectarian character given to the Queen's College, Galway, under which it has become very nearly derelict. It is of no use to the persons whom it was built to benefit, and it is no wonder that Catholics should raise the question of higher education when great institutions like that are locked and the doors barred against the Catholics of the country. It struck me that a good solution of this question would have been to hand over the Queen's Colleges of Galway and Cork to Catholic management, but these colleges have been used for the overflow of the Belfast College. Ulster sends 30 students to the College where Connaught

sends 33. It is downright robbery to the South of Ireland that all these endowments should be filched away by the North of Ireland. It is evident that the Lord Lieutenant is trying to pave the way to a Catholic university, but to do that he must alter the management of the Queen's Colleges.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR : The remarks of the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down call for some explanation from me. Since I have been Chief Secretary he has twice asked me whether Sir Robert Peel did not pledge himself to appoint Catholic professors to the Galway College. He has never given me the reference to the speech in which Sir Robert Peel is supposed to have done so, and I have been unable to find it. I think he refers, not to the speech Sir Robert Peel, but to that of Sir James Graham, who did on one occasion say :

" I am bound to state, although it is the earnest desire of Her Majesty's Government to meet the reasonable wishes of the great body of the Catholic subjects of Ireland, I cannot conceive it possible that any Government advising Her Majesty as to the nomination of professors would not in the first place endeavour to secure in the different colleges those who by their learning and abilities are the most competent ; and, beyond a doubt, on the part of many of the professors, an adherence to the Roman Catholic faith would be an additional recommendation."

The Committee will see that the opinion given by Sir James Graham there does not represent anything like the pledges which the hon. Gentleman represents were given by the Government of that day. He laid it down distinctly that the most competent persons should be appointed to the post. In the appointments that have been made since the present Government came into office that is the precedent that has been followed. If two equally competent persons were found, one of whom was a Roman Catholic, I personally should prefer that the appointment was given to him. I can assure the hon. Gentleman that religious or political considerations do not weigh with the Irish Government in regard to these appointments.

MR. HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.) : Though I am in favour of the argument of the hon. Member for East Mayo, and intend to vote with him if he carries this matter to a Division, I think I am bound to state the grounds for doing so ; I only speak for myself

and have no authority to speak for the right hon. and hon. Gentlemen who sit on these benches. I speak as a Protestant, and having had the inestimable advantages of an university education at Trinity College, Dublin, I am bound to say I believe an university education is essential, and I shall do everything in my power to achieve the object of affording that advantage to my Roman Catholic fellow countrymen. I fear that the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury to-night will be productive of much disappointment when it is read all over Ireland to-morrow. The First Lord of the Treasury, the highest but one of Her Majesty's Ministers, in a Government which is the most powerful in numbers that has existed during the present century, both by his speeches outside and within this House, and by that historic letter of the 23rd of January, 1899, in language of which he is so eminently the master, in the philosophic vein which gives an interest and a force to every argument he advances, makes out the strongest case for this university as being only a common act of justice to Ireland; and having for two or three years, ever since this Ministry has been in power, dangled as it were before the people of Ireland the hope of this Catholic University, he comes forward at this period of the session and abandons all hope for the present of the Government being able to make such a concession in our favour. That is grievously calculated to disappoint the people of Ireland. While I have no mandate to speak for the bishops and archbishops of Ireland, I can very well understand the feeling which they will entertain when they read the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, and when they find that, after all their negotiations and conferences and public pronouncements as to concessions having been made, the cold shoulder is turned upon them. I think a great mistake is entertained on both sides of this House, and I heard with regret the speech of the hon. Member for East Northamptonshire. It is with the utmost pain that I differ with any hon. Gentleman who sits upon this side of the House, but I feel the hon. Gentleman must have forgotten that this was one of the concessions which were given in Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule Bill of 1893. There was a clause in that Bill expressly empowering the Irish Parlia-

ment when constituted to establish a Catholic University with certain checks and conditions. I am now addressing my remarks to the hon. Member for East Northamptonshire and to those who agree with him, and I ask them with what show of consistency can they reconcile their vote on the occasion of that Bill with this negation of an act of common justice. But that, as I have said, was to be done subject to checks and conditions. I say the mistake is in supposing that we, and those agreeing with us—that is to say, the Catholics and Protestants of Ireland who agree with the Catholics on this question—are demanding what is called a Roman Catholic University. We demand a university for the Catholics, which is an altogether different thing. We do not ask for a university which is governed by the Roman Catholic hierarchy; we only ask for a university where the Catholics are not likely to have their religion sapped and undermined by long intercourse with young students of a different faith. It cannot be pretended for a moment that Dublin University is anything but a Protestant University. It is perfectly true that since the Test Act in 1873 the professorships and other emoluments have been thrown open, but the fact remains that upon the senate of the richest University in Europe there is not a single Catholic. The language of the hon. Member for Down is rather calculated to confuse the minds of English Members who do not understand the working of our universities. He spoke of the university as an old university, no doubt forgetting that the charter of the Queen's Colleges was only granted in 1849. It is not so old when we remember that Mr. Gladstone reminded the House that there were universities in Ireland in the sixth and seventh centuries, and that they existed in some form or other right up to the date of the Reformation. I think it was only in 1863 that these colleges were made into a university, and they ceased to exist as a university in 1879. One of the great things which we think might rise from this new university is that it will enable the talented young men of Ireland of the humblest rank to obtain that education which is at present beyond their reach, and begin the world with this evidence of their fitness. If I do not weary the House I should just like to quote upon this subject the words

Mr Hemphill.

of Dr. Healy, the Bishop of Clonfert, a report of whose speech at the meeting at the Free Trade Hall on the matter appeared in the *Freeman's Journal* of 24th January last. I will only quote one passage. Dr. Healy said :

"I have no doubt the call for a Catholic University endowed by the State has somewhat roused their ire, and led to a very grave mistake. The university that we seek is not a Catholic university in their sense of the word, nor in any strict sense of the word. The proposed university would be an unsectarian university ; it would have no endowed theological chairs ; its endowment would not be the endowment of the Catholic religion, nor of distinctively Catholic teaching in any shape or form. The Bishops of Ireland, when these questions were raised in the House of Commons, gave solemn and repeated assurances of the fact. We recognise the difficulties of the Government. We have sympathy for the tenderness of the Nonconformist conscience, as well as for our own. We do not want the ecclesiastical authority to be predominant on the governing body. On the contrary we are prepared to accept a majority of laymen. We seek no endowment for theological teaching. We shall impose no religious tests for admission to our halls, or degrees or offices or emoluments. Our lectures shall be open to all comers, and professors shall enjoy all reasonable fixity of tenure, and shall not be liable to dismissal at the caprice of any man or body of men. What more do they want? In these respects the new university would be as free and open as Trinity College itself ; only as Trinity is Protestant in its tone, its atmosphere, its spirit, so the new university would be Catholic exactly in the same sense."

That is the language of a very eminent prelate who speaks with great authority, and it is vain for anybody to go into the lobby against this proposal, and hug to himself the idea that he is saving the country from some Catholic institution worthy of the days of Torquemada. I would next refer to a passage in a speech by the Rev. Dr. O'Donnell, in my opinion one of the most high-minded prelates that ever adorned any Christian Church. The speech was delivered on the 25th of November, 1898. I quote from the *Freeman's Journal* of the 26th. These are the words of Dr. O'Donnell :

"We only ask an endowment for the highest kind of secular instruction, where we can avail of it with safe consciences. That Irish Catholics are to be left just where they are in want of facilities for Catholic education scarcely anyone contends. (Hear, hear.) There is not a post, from filling a university chair to managing a railway, or planting a garden, or directing an industrial project, for which Scotchmen cannot be found of exceptional qualifications. Is anything similar true of

Ireland, or would anything similar be true of Scotland, if the great bulk of the Scotch people had been excluded from university education? (Applause.) Well, if the non-Catholics of Ireland want the maximum of advantages to themselves, and to the State, from any provision to give university education to Catholics, they would be well advised to advocate the highest facilities of education for us in connection with our own principles. In any case, really those who would give us no facilities, except on lines that please themselves and displease us, have scarcely Hampden's reason for asking the tax-gatherer to call again. (Applause.) But we are told that our whole project is concerned with the idea of extending clerical influence. Well, if any clergyman thought that the extension of clerical influence in the daily affairs of the people was likely to be enhanced by the establishment of a university for Catholics, he is in for a serious disappointment."

Have the great bulk of the Scottish people been excluded from university education? No ; for years they have enjoyed the advantage of it, and I understand that men of the humblest farming classes attend universities. They have technical education and agricultural schools ; they are taught the arts and sciences too. In every part of Germany also for years university education has been open to every class of society, and consequently Germans, as a whole, are beating in the industrial race almost every other country, thanks to the advantages acquired in their early training. Switzerland, Sweden, France, and Italy enjoy the advantages of university teaching. Why, then, should not Ireland also enjoy these advantages? On the ground of mere policy why hesitate to make this concession? We are sometimes asked why it is that Ireland, possessing some natural advantages far in excess of those of any other country in Europe, should have the poorest, worst clothed, and worst fed population of all. Well, one reason is the neglect of education. Trinity College is pervaded by an atmosphere of Protestantism, and no one will deny that that is not a suitable centre for the general education of the inhabitants of a country three-fourths of whom are Roman Catholics. Archbishop Walsh, writing in the *Freeman's Journal* of the 30th of December, 1898, says :

"I have here to refer only to the first of those questions. It was this : What, in our view, should be the proportion of laymen to ecclesiastics on the governing body of the projected Catholic University?

"Our reply to that important question was as definite as the question itself. It was that,

so far from laying claim to any 'exclusive control' to be vested in our Episcopal body or in any members of it, we did not think it reasonable to claim that there should be on the governing body of the new University any 'preponderance,' not to say of bishops, but even of ecclesiastics, and that, moreover, so far from seeking any such 'preponderance,' we did not look for even an 'equality' in number as between laymen and ecclesiastics, but were prepared to accept a university having upon its governing body 'a majority of laymen.'

"The declaration in which our views were thus expressed was widely published, through the leading Press agencies and otherwise, in the newspapers at the time. It is strange how, notwithstanding all this, we still so frequently find it taken for granted that no University for Catholics would satisfy the claims of the bishops unless it were placed under their own exclusive control."

I thank the House for the indulgence it has extended to me, and I again say my firm conviction is that the foundation of a Catholic university would open up a new era of prosperity to my poor country. I would remind hon. Members that "they laugh at scars who never felt the wound." There was a meeting at the Mansion House, Dublin, in February, 1899, the Lord Mayor presiding, and I would like to quote some of the resolutions passed. Lord Emly proposed, and Mr. Edmund Dease, Deputy Lieutenant, seconded :

"That this Conference re-affirms the following declaration of Irish Catholic laymen on the subject of university education, which was adopted at the public meeting held in the Mansion House last year :—

"That it is the constitutional right of all British subjects to adopt whatever system of collegiate or university education they prefer.

"That perfect religious equality involves equality in all educational advantages afforded by the State.

"That a large number of Irishmen are at present precluded from the enjoyment of university education, honours, and emoluments, on account of conscientious religious opinions regarding the existing systems of education.

"That we therefore demand such a change in the system of collegiate and university education as will place those who entertain these conscientious objections on a footing of equality with the rest of their fellow-countrymen as regards colleges, university honours and emoluments, university examination, government, and representation."

The next resolution, which expressed disappointment and regret that the Government had not yet taken steps to settle this important and urgent question, was moved by Lord Powerscourt and seconded by the hon. Member for East Mayo, while a third was moved by the

Mr. Hemphill.

Most Rev. Dr. Healy, Bishop of Clonfert, and seconded by Sir Henry Bellingham, Bart. The House will see how all classes support this movement. Let it, then, divest itself of prejudice and not turn an open ear to the contentions of those who have been brought up with the idea that there is nothing good connected with the Catholic religion, and that the best thing would be to hunt all Catholics out of Ireland.

*MR. YERBURGH (Chester) : As one of the rank and file of the Conservative Party, I feel we owe a great deal of gratitude to the Leader of the House for the part he has played in advancing the cause of Catholic university education in Ireland. This is a subject which demands our serious consideration. The right hon. Gentleman has said that the most difficult matters he has to meet on the subject are ignorance and prejudice. As to prejudice, I do think we have it well exemplified to-night in the person of the hon. Member for West Belfast. I do not think I ever heard a speech which showed a greater sense of bitter religious prejudice than the speech of the hon. Member. And as to want of knowledge, I am bound to confess that I did not know until to-night that the educational system of Ireland was so very largely denominational. I had before to-night been in favour of granting a Catholic University to Ireland on broad and general grounds, but after hearing that the educational system of Ireland is largely denominational I feel my position very greatly strengthened. What are the objections to the proposal? In the main, as far as I can gather them, they are that the educational facilities in Ireland are sufficient, and all that is required is that the Roman Catholic population should make use of them. But Trinity College and the other colleges have been condemned by the priesthood and by the higher power in Rome, and therefore it is perfectly evident that Roman Catholics cannot make use of those institutions. What are the facts as to those who do use these institutions? Out of 1,500 students at Trinity College and at Queen's College, Belfast, only 100 are Roman Catholics.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL : 6 per cent.

*MR. YERBURGH : And that shows that they do not consider that they can

safely go to these colleges. If further proof be wanted, I think it is to be found in the fact that they have some colleges at which excellent work is done—work which compares in a most favourable light with what is done in the Queen's Colleges. Only two years ago my right hon. friend the Chief Secretary admitted that it was a reproach that these educational advantages were not shared equally between Roman Catholics and Protestants. While I have always held that there is no necessity for a separate Parliament for Ireland, I do believe that Catholics are sincere in their objection to the present colleges, and in the interests not only of Ireland, but also of the Empire, I shall vote in favour of Ireland's claim for a Catholic university.

*MR. SHARPE (Kensington, N.): I am proud to associate myself with the noble speech of the First Lord of the Treasury on this subject, and especially with the pathetic words in which the right hon. Gentleman vindicated his right as a Minister of the Crown to exercise his independent judgment on such far-reaching questions as that of a Roman Catholic University for Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman recognises the difficulties of carrying a large Cabinet with him on this question, but he is justified in saying that he has a right to do what he can to educate the Party he leads so well in this House; and that the right hon. Gentleman will succeed in educating his Party in favour of a Roman Catholic University in Ireland there is not the slightest doubt. We have thrown over the Irish Church, we have dealt with the Irish land question and with the government of the Irish counties, and in order to do justice in all respects we have redressed real and legitimate grievances. It now only remains for us to deal with what may be called the sentimental grievances. If the Irish people desire a Catholic University why not let them have one? Speaking as an Irish Protestant and as a graduate of Dublin University, I am glad the right hon. Gentleman has taken up this position. There is much narrow and bitter sectarian feeling in the country, especially among the Party opposite, but public opinion on this question is ripening, and I hope that during the life of the present Government—I do not say the life of the present Parliament—the legitimate aspirations of the Roman

Catholic majority of the Irish people in this matter will be satisfied.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: The hon. Gentleman is a hopeful man if he thinks we shall get a university which Catholics can accept in the lifetime of the present Parliament. I would have liked to see the two representatives of Dublin University present, for I am bound to say, having regard to the speech of the First Lord of the Treasury, the position of Dublin University is as incompatible with justice as was the position of the Irish Church before Disestablishment. He wound up that speech by saying that the granting to the Irish people of a Catholic University would help to keep up the union as far as Ireland was concerned. So we have it, according to your own confession, that Ireland now is governed not for her own interest, but is made subservient to the interests of another people. There is a jealousy in giving us education. You do not want the Irish people to cultivate the intellects God has given them, because they would take advantage of those intellects to do the best they could for their country, and that is exactly what you do not want. I protest in the strongest way against the denial of justice to Trinity College, because the position of Trinity College is henceforth indefensible. Trinity College is a sectarian institution. Eight years after the Bill of 1873 the Provost of Trinity College died, and there was the greatest desire to appoint a certain Doctor. But he was a layman, and it was decided to have a clerical appointment. The Provost then appointed was followed by Dr. Salmon, one of the greatest theologians—

*MR. SHARPE: One of the greatest mathematicians.

MR SWIFT MACNEILL: And the greatest controversialist against the Church of Rome of the age. It is an astonishing position the First Lord of the Treasury has taken. He has a majority of 135, and a strong position in the Cabinet—in fact, he is the keystone of the Cabinet; he has enormous influence in the country; and yet he tells us he is unable to carry a Catholic University. I cannot believe that to be so. He says this is not the first time that the Leader of the House of Commons has been unable to carry measures that he

personally likes, and he cited one example in the case of Mr. Pitt ; but I will give him three. In 1781 Mr. Pitt raised the standard of Reform, as a pious opinion, but Reform was not carried till 1832. Mr. Pitt was also very much in favour of the emancipation of the slaves, but although he was practically in power from 1773 till his death it was not carried until many years after, and it would never have been carried then if we Irish Members had not got in here and carried it in spite of you. Then there is the cardinal example cited by the right hon. Gentleman. The First Lord of the Treasury, if he went out of Parliament to-morrow, could certainly lead fields of thought in six or seven departments ; but his mind, though so beautifully constructed, is not very good for details, and a more unfortunate example than Mr. Pitt's inability to carry Catholic emancipation on account of the opposition of the Cabinet could not well be found. The person who opposed Catholic emancipation was not one of his own colleagues ; it was the same person who lost this country America—King George III. The idea of trying to draw a parallel between 1899 and 1801 is simply absurd. If the right hon. Gentleman would put down his foot as Mr. Pitt ought to have done he could carry this question instantly. The matter is not even in so good a position as on the 28th August, 1889. The First Lord gave a definite promise to do his best to introduce a Catholic University Bill. A few days before that he had said that the intermediate education system had many defects, but the higher education system was suffering from a great many more defects, and should be taken in hand first. No doubt he intended to do it, but he should have the courage to face the music with reference to his own opinions. If he resigned the leadership through it he would come back more powerful than ever ; but, even if he lost the office, he has many countervailing resources. He is a great historian, a great metaphysician, a great philosopher—and if he left office to-morrow for the sake of a Catholic University in Ireland we might possibly forget some of the hard things we have said of him and that he has said of us. But he seems to have made the great refusal. He has had a wonderful opportunity of doing good to hundreds of thousands of young men, of giving them a chance in life to

rise to an elevated position, of giving them the inestimable blessing of a university education. It is not because he cannot that he does not do this, but because there are difficulties in the way. In the wish that justice should be done and learning advanced, I ask the First Lord not to allow himself to be swayed by the ignorance or prejudices of persons for whom he must have a profound intellectual contempt, but to rise to the situation, and to lead not merely the House of Commons but public opinion in England upon this question, and if he falls he will rise again and rise more gloriously.

*MR. WILLIAM MOORE (Antrim, N.): This is a question which excites a good deal of interest in the North of Ireland. The First Lord of the Treasury has no more loyal supporters than the Conservative Members for Ulster, but in this matter we are, and I say it with regret, with one exception, entirely at issue with him. Since the First Lord made this a part of practical politics we have had four elections in Ulster, at each of which there was a Conservative candidate. Three of those candidates were returned, each pledged to resist this proposal, and it is with profound regret that we Ulster Members cannot follow the First Lord. There seems to be a difference between the right hon. Gentleman's attitude on this question and his attitude on any other. In any other matter he seems to recognise that his opponents—generally on the other side of the House—may have reasons for differing from him, but in this case he appears to assume that the only reason why we differ from him is our ignorance.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR : Perhaps my hon. friend will allow me to say that the ignorance I referred to was the natural ignorance of the average Englishman of the details of the educational system as it obtains in Ireland.

*MR. WILLIAM MOORE : No one is more ready than I am to accept at once any disclaimer on the part of the right hon. Gentleman of a general allegation of ignorance against his most loyal followers, and I am exceedingly glad I misunderstood him. But whether it is ignorance of general principles or ignorance of details, his Irish supporters are largely com-

mitted to it, and that ignorance, as he terms it, instead of diminishing, is increasing every day, and not only in Ireland but also in Lancashire and other parts of England. As to the treatment which we receive from the other side, there appears to be no room in their vocabulary for any word to apply to those who differ from them on Irish questions except "bigots" and "bigotry." I am not a member of the Presbyterian Church, nor of the Roman Catholic Church, but assuming that the governing body of each church equally desires the welfare of their congregations as well as of the country, I feel bound to treat at least with equal respect the decisions of the Roman Catholic hierarchy to those of the Moderator and heads of the Presbyterian Church. An Englishman, looking at the matter impartially, will find that the heads of one Church meeting at Maynooth support the proposal, while the heads of the other Church meeting in Belfast oppose it. Can a charge of "bigotry" be fairly made against the opponents of the movement when the educated leaders of one of the Protestant churches in the country in equally solemn conclave object to its terms? If the Roman Catholics style their opponents as bigots, the Presbyterians have an equal right to call their opponents bigots also. There may be bigots on both sides, but there certainly are also reasonable men on both sides. It has been made a subject of reproach by the hon. Member for North Tyrone that the Member for East Northamptonshire was proposing to vote against the establishment of a Roman Catholic University in Ireland, whereas he and his leader supported identically the same proposition when they voted for Home Rule, one of the grounds why the North of Ireland was solid and steadfast against Home Rule.

DR. COMMINS (Cork County, S.E.): The North of Ireland was not solid.

*MR. WILLIAM MOORE: I am talking of the twenty-three Members who are generally called the "North of Ireland" Members. One of the reasons why that part of Ireland voted against Home Rule was the apprehension which they entertained that the Roman Catholic Church, under a Home Rule Parliament, would be endowed. If this leads in anything like the same direction, the same apprehension

would arise. The cry of hon. Members opposite is that we must have in Ireland religious equality. Under the existing state of affairs there is religious equality, and if there is reasonable ground for assuming that the endowment of a Roman Catholic University would destroy that religious equality, we are entitled to object to this proposal. In 1870 there was the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, not established; the Episcopal Church, which was established; and the Roman Catholic Church. In order to give religious equality the Church of Ireland was disestablished, leaving the three churches in precisely similar positions. Each was independent and left to shift for itself. In order to put the universities on the same footing as the Churches, and so as to prevent one Church having any superior claim over another, Queen's Colleges had been originally founded and were then continued. The complaint against them is that they are universities in which there is no religion, and for that reason they are objected to. It is argued that Roman Catholics have no facilities for obtaining university education. Why? The universities are there — they have had the Queen's Colleges; they have had Trinity College; but the difficulty arises from their own spiritual advisers, who say, "You shall not enter here." The facilities are there, supplied by the Government, and if they are not made use of it is not the fault of the British taxpayer. It is believed that this proposed university is to be one primarily open for the encouragement of learning among Roman Catholic students. It may be you will let others in; I have no doubt you will be very glad to get them if you can. But the fundamental thing is that, while it is for Roman Catholic students, it is to be governed exclusively by the Roman Catholic bishops and clergy.

Several HON. MEMBERS: No, no!

*MR. WILLIAM MOORE: They are to have the controlling voice in the government, and I understand that otherwise they will not accept it. I may be wrong—

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: You are wrong.

*MR. WILLIAM MOORE: I understand that the only question of difference is as to what the proportion of lay representatives on the governing body is to be to the clerical representatives. There is no mistake but that, whether lay or clerical, they are all to belong to the Roman Catholic Church. The popular conception is that this institution is to be one governed and controlled by the Roman Catholic bishops just as it is alleged Trinity College is now governed and controlled by the Protestants.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The last thing that occurred to me was that the university I desired to see established was to be one under the control of the Catholic hierarchy.

*MR. WILLIAM MOORE: I am exceedingly relieved to hear that, but at the same time, with my ordinary knowledge of what is happening, I do not think I am going too far when I say that the Roman Catholic hierarchy will accept nothing else than I have described.

MR. DILLON: The hon. Member is absolutely wrong. The Roman Catholic hierarchy, by a unanimous resolution, stated two years ago that they were content that there should be a majority of laymen on the Senate.

*MR. WILLIAM MOORE: Who must be Roman Catholics.

MR. DILLON: That was never stated.

*MR. WILLIAM MOORE: Then I cannot understand what is the objection of Roman Catholics to the Royal University.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: It is not a teaching University at all.

*MR. WILLIAM MOORE: If they only wanted to add a teaching staff to the Royal University I would support them, but that is a very different thing from setting up a Roman Catholic University according to the popular conception.

MR. T. M. HEALY: You persist in keeping on the Senate of the Royal University a majority of Protestants, as there are at present.

*MR. WILLIAM MOORE: I do not know what the constitution is at present.

MR. T. M. HEALY: The numbers are 19 to 15.

*MR. WILLIAM MOORE: One of the objections to Trinity College is the Protestant Divinity School. Speaking for myself, and being anxious to see Trinity College, as it is intended to be, the national university, I would not regret to see that Divinity School less closely connected with it. But at the same time I do not think the Divinity School at Trinity College can be said to stand in any different position from the Divinity School at Maynooth. If it is said that the Divinity School at Trinity College is endowed, it will be in the recollection of the House that the State paid to Maynooth £326,000 in a lump sum in the year 1871, equivalent to £12,000 per annum, on which presumably Maynooth is supported. The great mistake of English statesmen is that they think they can govern Ireland by compartments. You have a Roman Catholic compartment and a Protestant compartment. You will give no satisfaction to the whole of Ireland if you give one of those compartments superiority over the other. It will be the greatest possible mistake if you are going to provide for the Roman Catholic section, which, however large, is still but a section of the entire population, by State money in a manner you would not for the other. It is a misfortune for Ireland that every child is to be labelled from birth as a Protestant or Roman Catholic. We want to know each other better, and have our religious differences and asperities softened into mere religious individuality by mutual intercourse in the other paths of life with each other. I began with an expression with reference to the Irish Bar, and I come back again to it. At the Irish Bar there are men of very different education, and every form of religion, and all round they are the most charitable, and on the best terms with one another, because they mix with one another. That we should not have with a separate university.

*MR. DOOGAN (Tyrone, E.): The hon. and learned Member who has just sat down disclaims all intention of being narrow

or bigoted, but still he argues strongly that the great majority of the people of Ireland should be deprived of a university education which they can use consistently with their religious convictions, and that the rest of the community in Ireland should hold all the emoluments. How he can reconcile such an idea with justice, fair play, and equality is beyond my comprehension. The hon. Member says that there is religious equality in Ireland. It is true that the Established Church was disestablished in 1870, but it was left all its emoluments, and its immense endowments are now available for the education of its members. But the Catholics of Ireland have no endowments. He also argues that the establishment of a Catholic university would be an endowment of the Catholic religion, and therefore a denominational endowment. I have the honour of being an Ulster Member myself as well as he, and I think that the majority of the population of Ulster are in accordance with my view that the redress of this long-standing grievance should be pressed strongly on the justice of the House of Commons, and the pressure continued till the just demand be conceded. This question has been before the country for half a century, and still it makes very little headway. I daresay the hon. and learned Member was not in the House when the First Lord of the Treasury referred to the amount of public money which is given as a practical endowment of religion in Ireland. The primary system of education in Ireland is practically denominational, and there is scarcely one Protestant attending a school in Ulster in which the teacher is a Catholic and a priest the manager where the Protestants can get up a school of their own. Not only is primary education in Ireland denominational, but the same remark applies to the intermediate system and also to the Royal University, and there is practically no way out of the difficulty except to establish a university in Ireland which will be Catholic in the sense that Trinity College is Protestant. That would not be a Catholic University, and the majority of its senate would be laymen. The hon. and learned Gentleman seemed very much afraid that the Roman Catholic bishops would have control, and he apparently would prefer to have the Catholics of Ireland remain in ignorance for all eternity, yet he claims that his

intercourse with his colleagues at the Irish Bar is always harmonious, and that theological questions never arise. I am glad to hear that, although the sentiments he has enunciated in his speech do not bear it out. But I will give the hon. and learned Member this credit, that there was a marked difference in toleration between his speech and the one delivered by the hon. Member for West Belfast. He was dissatisfied with the First Lord of the Treasury for stating that one of the obstacles to his success with regard to this university question was the ignorance and obscurantism which prevailed. The hon. Member for West Belfast stated that the influence of a Catholic University had a bad effect in all countries where they were established, and he stated distinctly that if the First Lord of the Treasury were entering into an agreement with the people of Ireland on this question he objected altogether to chairs of theology, philosophy, history and biology being endowed. I do not see why chairs of biology, philosophy and history should not be endowed, but as a matter of fact, it has never been proposed that a chair of theology should be endowed by public money. The hon. Member wound up his speech by telling the First Lord in a bland, calm, composed, and self-sufficient manner that he should have no confidence in Catholic bishops, and that they would find an opportunity of evading any compact that might be entered into with the Government by their Synod. That was a monstrously unjust statement to launch forth in this House concerning such a body as the Catholic hierarchy. I do not wonder at the First Lord of the Treasury stating that the great obstacles against forming public opinion in favour of this question were ignorance, prejudice, and bigotry. The right hon. Gentleman said that he would continue in his missionary work. His speech was, to my mind, sympathetic, and he acknowledged the justice and necessity of the demand, although he added that it was not expedient to make it a Government question. But if the Catholic claim is right and just it ought to be given effect to. The right hon. Gentleman held out much hope, but "hope springs eternal in the human breast," and to me it appeared as if his speech was delivered for the purpose of building a golden bridge to retreat from the promises and pledges he had given. All through the penal times education

was practically denied to the people of Ireland, and we heard to-day from an hon. and learned Member about the price which was put on the head of a schoolmaster, a priest, and a wolf. These laws were ingeniously constructed with a view to exterminate the people of Ireland, or failing that to bring them up in ignorance, so that they might remain for all time "hewers of wood and drawers of water." Sixty years ago the National system of education was introduced into Ireland. This was the first grant of public money for education since the penal days that Catholics could avail of. Under that system there was no endowment whatever for Catholics as such, and in comparison with the amount of money lavished in Scotland and England in primary schools, evening schools, technical schools, and colleges, the education of Ireland is in every department starved, especially when it cannot be denied that Ireland has been deprived by over-taxation of an immense sum of money. It does seem to me a very reasonable request that Ireland should claim a share of her own money to establish a Catholic University. Much restitution is due to the people of Ireland for the cruel wrongs done to them in the past, in being not only deprived of all opportunities for education at home, but debarred from seeking it abroad, and also for the many millions which she has undoubtedly paid in over-taxation. That view is held not only by the Catholics of Ireland, but by every intelligent Protestant throughout the country and by the principal Ministers and ex-Ministers in the House. The only objection comes from the north-east corner of Ulster. I fear that the First Lord will have a great deal to do before he converts this small section of the community. There are only fifteen Ulster members in this House who oppose this demand, and that is a very small following to induce the right hon. Gentleman to abandon his pledges through motives of political expediency. We on this side of the House and the people of Ireland confidently expect from the right hon. Gentleman something more substantial than a hope. The people of Ireland are suffering from that sickness of the heart which arises from hope deferred. I hope, therefore, that the First Lord of the Treasury will take a more active part in pressing on his colleagues in the Government the justice of this demand, and that hence-

Mr. Doogan.

forth he will make it a Government question, as no reform has ever been won by academic "hope" and pious intentions. If he does he will earn the gratitude of the people of Ireland, and he will go far in giving the Irish Catholics a chance of putting themselves in a position of equality, of equipping themselves for the battle of life, and of removing the shackles of inferiority from their necks.

MR. JORDAN (Fermanagh, S.): I would like, as an Irish Protestant, to say that I sympathise strongly with my Catholic fellow-countrymen in their earnest efforts to obtain university education through a medium they can approve of. I am not merely a Protestant, but a Nonconformist of the staunchest type. Not even to the hon. Member for the Louth Division of Lincolnshire would I lower my colours in the matter of Nonconformity or the tenderness of the Nonconformist conscience. And yet as such I most earnestly desire, in the interest of education itself, as well as in the interests of Catholic Irishmen, to see this difficult question settled on some basis satisfactory to all parties. They demand such a settlement. Representative men of all parties in England are agreed that their demand is both reasonable and just, and should be conceded. I cannot therefore see how it is that some plan cannot be devised to settle this matter. The longer it remains unsettled the worse for education and all parties concerned. I hold that Roman Catholics have a right to equality of treatment with Protestants; and specially no minority, as the Protestants of Ireland are, should have exceptional endowments, rights, and privileges which are denied to the majority. I know it is said that Dublin University is open to Catholics. But suppose it is—and I admit it is—that, I say, is not equality of treatment. The whole trend, and tendency, and tone and atmosphere of the Dublin University are Protestant or set to Protestantism, and I freely confess that, unless some other arrangement could be arrived at

than now exists, were I a Catholic I would be slow to enter such an institution. Unless compelled by absolute necessity, I freely admit I, as a Protestant, would not go to a Catholic University similarly conditioned to Protestantism as the Dublin University is to Catholicism. And although I think I am as liberal and free from bigotry as any man in the kingdom, yet if I had sons to be trained I would assuredly not send them to a Catholic university. Not that I would dread the companionship of Catholic boys, but I would not on any account wish them to imbibe Roman Catholic principles. I can therefore deeply sympathise with Roman Catholics in their desire to obtain proper facilities for the training of their youths, and I shall support them in any reasonable demand for that purpose, and the sooner these facilities are granted the better. Were I asked which I would prefer—the grafting of a Catholic college on the Dublin University, or the establishment and endowment of a brand new Catholic University, as a Protestant I distinctly prefer a new university, and if the new university be even a gingerbread one, as the hon. Member for East Down described it, and if the Catholics accept it, and are unable to hold their own with the older university, it is their own loss and to the gain of the Protestants. The solicitude of the Member for East Down as to the value of the respective degrees is useless under those circumstances. Let the Protestants retain the old. Let the Roman Catholics get the new, with which they will be satisfied, and end this unhappy state of affairs.

MR. MURNAGHAN (Tyrone, Mid): The hon. and learned Member for North Antrim is one of the ascendancy party in Ireland which possesses all the privileges and advantages, and he therefore does not like that his fellow-countrymen should share them, because he thinks if they had a chance equal to his own his present advantages would be less open to him and his class. I must say that the statement

of the First Lord of the Treasury to-day is strangely at variance with his expressions on former occasions, and I doubt if ever in this House there was such a retreat on the part of an important Minister as that which we have witnessed. I would wish to direct the attention of the Committee to expressions used on this subject by Ministers of the day on previous occasions, who were not afraid to pledge their Governments to action. In 1885 the then Chancellor of the Exchequer said :

“If we be in office next year I hope that we shall be able to advance some proposal which will be a satisfactory settlement of this important question.”

How different are those words from the words that fell from the lips of the right hon. Gentleman to-day. He could not speak as a member of the Government at all. His missionary labours admittedly have been a failure, and he now tells the people of Ireland that they may have to wait for many a day for the realisation of their hope of having higher education for their children. The Leader of the House in 1889 used these words with reference to this subject on the Appropriation Bill :—

“We have no alternative but to try to devise some means by which the wants of the Catholic population will be met.”

In 1889—ten long years ago—a Minister of the Crown had no alternative but to settle this matter—

It being midnight, the Chairman left the chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

SUPPLY [22ND JUNE].

Resolution reported.

CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES, 1899-1900.

CLASS III.

“That a sum, not exceeding £39,895, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete

the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, for Criminal Prosecutions and other Law Charges in Ireland."

Resolution agreed to.

LINCOLNSHIRE CORONERS BILL.
[Lords.]

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 :—

Committee report Progress ; to sit again upon Monday next.

TELEGRAPHS (TELEPHONIC COMMUNICATION) BILL.

On the motion for adjournment :—

MR. DALZIEL (Kircaldy Burghs) : As I see the right hon. Gentleman the Secre-

tary of the Treasury in his place, perhaps he would tell us when the motion for referring the Telephones Bill to the Standing Committee will be taken.

THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY
(Sir W. H. WALROND, Devonshire, Tiverton) : It is down as third Order for Monday.

MR. DALZIEL : Will it be taken on Monday ?

SIR W. H. WALROND : I hope so.

Adjourned at five minutes after
Twelve o'clock, till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 26th June 1899.

SAT FIRST.

The Earl of Malmesbury sat first in Parliament after the death of his father.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with :

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 7).

And the Certificates that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with :

IONIAN BANK.

WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL.

BROMPTON AND PICCADILLY CIRCUS RAILWAY.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

CORK CORPORATION (FINANCE) BILL.

Committee to meet on Thursday next.

STOCKPORT CORPORATION BILL.

To be read 2^a on Monday next.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 4) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1^a; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners; and to be read 2^a To-morrow. —(*The Earl of Denbigh.*) (No. 145.)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 12) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1^a; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners; and to be read 2^a To-morrow. —(*The Lord Harris.*) (No. 146.)

CENTRAL ELECTRIC SUPPLY BILL.

The Queen's consent signified; and Bill reported from the Select Committee with Amendments.

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GAS ORDERS CONFIRMATION (No. 2) BILL. [Lords.]

Reported from the Select Committee with Amendments, and committed to a Committee of the whole House.

WEST MIDDLESEX WATER BILL.

The Queen's consent signified; and Bill reported from the Select Committee with Amendments.

LEITH HARBOUR AND DOCKS BILL.

SOUTH - EASTERN AND LONDON CHATHAM, AND DOVER RAILWAY COMPANIES (NEW LINES) BILL.

BAKER STREET AND WATERLOO RAILWAY BILL.

BLACKPOOL IMPROVEMENT BILL.

GREAT NORTHERN AND STRAND RAILWAY BILL.

LONDON IMPROVEMENTS BILL.

Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills; viz.:

- L. Zouche of Haryngworth,
- L. Sherborne,
- L. Granard (E. Granard),
- L. Hawkesbury (Chairman),
- L. Muncaster;

Agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly: The Committee to meet on Thursday next, at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills.

FISHGUARD AND ROSSLARE RAILWAYS AND HARBOUR BILL.

BIRMINGHAM CORPORATION BILL.

Read 2^a, and committed.

HASTINGS HARBOUR BILL. [Lords.]

Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

ST. JAMES'S AND PALL MALL ELECTRIC LIGHT BILL.

Read 3^a, with the Amendment, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

T

LEEDS CORPORATION BILL.**LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (GENERAL POWERS) BILL.****LONDON UNITED TRAMWAYS BILL.****MENSTONE WATER BILL.**

Brought from the Commons ; Read 1^a ; and referred to the Examiners.

CARDIFF RAILWAY BILL.**RHONDDA URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL BILL.**

Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to.

HASTINGS AND ST. LEONARDS GAS BILL. [Lords.]

Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments ; the said Amendments considered, and agreed to.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 4) BILL.

To be read 2^a To-morrow—(*The Lord Harris.*)

PIER AND HARBOUR PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL.**ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 7) BILL.****ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 16) BILL.**

To be read 2^a To-morrow—(*The Earl of Dudley.*)

MILITARY LANDS PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

To be read 2^a To-morrow—(*The Marquess of Lansdowne.*)

TRAMWAYS ORDERS CONFIRMATION (No. 2) BILL. [Lords.]**TRAMWAYS ORDERS CONFIRMATION (No. 3) BILL. [Lords.]**

House to be in Committee To-morrow.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION (LONDON) BILL. [Lords.]

Amendments reported (according to Order), and Bill to be read 3^a To-morrow.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 3) BILL.**HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES PROVISIONAL ORDER (BORROWSTOUNNESS) BILL.**

Read the third time (according to order), and passed.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 18) BILL.**ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 19) BILL.****PIER AND HARBOUR PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 1) BILL.**

Read the second time (according to order) ; and committed to a Committee of the whole House To-morrow.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 3) BILL.

House in Committee (according to order) ; Bill reported without amendment ; Standing Committee negatived ; and Bill to be read the third time To-morrow.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 5) BILL.

Amendments reported (according to order) ; and Bill to be read the third time To-morrow.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 6) BILL.

Read the third time (according to order), and passed.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 8) BILL.

House in Committee (according to order) ; Bill reported without amendment ; Standing Committee negatived ; and Bill to be read the third time To-morrow.

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.**ARMY (MILITARY WORKS) BILL, 1899.**

Schedules showing the expenditure on services to be undertaken under the Military Works Bill of 1899 and the complete War Office scheme.

PUBLIC RECORDS.

Sixtieth Annual Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records.

FISHERIES (IRELAND).

Annual Report of the Inspectors of Irish Fisheries, for the year 1898.

DUBLIN HOSPITALS.

Forty-first Report of the Board of Superintendence ; with appendices.

AGRARIAN OFFENCES (PROVINCES) (IRELAND).

Return for the year ended 31st December, 1898.

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

PEACE PRESERVATION (IRELAND) ACTS.

Two Orders in Council, dated 17th June, 1899, with respect to the importation into Ireland of arms and ammunition.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACTS, 1894 AND 1896.

Order, dated 20th day of June, 1899, No. 5952, revoking Order No. 5912, which prohibited the conveyance of animals by the s.s. "J. W. Taylor."

SUPERANNUATION.

Treasury Minute, dated 16th June, 1899, granting a retired allowance to Mr. John Dalzell, officer of Excise, Belfast Collection, Inland Revenue, under Section 2 of the Superannuation Act, 1887.

LAND REGISTRY.

Account of receipts and payments in respect of the Land Registry for the year ended 31st March, 1899.

HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE AND COURT OF APPEAL.

Account showing the receipts and expenditure in respect of the High Court of Justice and the Court of Appeal during the year ended 31st March, 1899.

POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANKS.

Accounts presented of all deposits received and paid during the year ended 31st December, 1898, and of the sums received and paid by the National Debt Commission on account of the Fund for the Post Office Savings Banks in the same year.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

PETITIONS.

LONDON GOVERNMENT BILL, 1899.

Petitions for amendment of—of the Whitechapel District Board of Works, the Vestry of the Hamlet of Mile End Old Town, the Vestry of the Parish of St. Martin-in-the-Fields; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

VACCINATION ACTS.

Petition for repeal of compulsory clauses in—of the Guardians of the Poor of Reading Union; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

LIGHT LOAD LINE BILL.

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

EARL GREY: I would venture to appeal to the noble Lord in charge of this Bill (Lord Muskerry) to postpone the Second Reading till a later date. The Bill was only printed on Saturday, and the shipowners in the North of England, who have telegraphed and written to me on this subject, strongly protest against a Bill of this great importance, which vitally affects the shipping industry, being dealt with in this hasty manner. I hope the noble Lord will see his way to comply with the request which I venture to make.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS: On behalf of the Shipowners' Parliamentary Committee, I desire to support the appeal of my noble friend for the postponement of the discussion upon this Bill.

LORD MUSKERRY: I have no hesitation in agreeing, after the appeal of the noble Lords, to postpone the Second Reading of this Bill. I might mention, however, that the Bill was read a first time on Monday last, and I do not know why it was not circulated before Saturday. Would it suit the noble Lords if I put the Bill down for to-morrow?

EARL GREY: That would be too short a time for the Bill to be properly considered, and I certainly think it is only proper that so important an industry should have ample opportunity of looking into this Bill before your Lordships are asked to give it a Second Reading.

Order for Second Reading discharged.

QUESTION.

MAIL STEAMER CONTRACTS.

*LORD KELVIN: My Lords, I beg to ask Her Majesty's Government (1) whether British mail steamers carrying

mails for the Post Office are under contract with the Home or Colonial Governments to perform the service contracted for in stated times under penalties in case of late arrival, or with bonus in case of arrival before the specified time, and with or without a clause remitting the penalty when it is proved that the lateness of arrival is due to seamanlike care for the safety of the ship; (2) whether the Government will undertake that in future every contract made by the Postmaster-General for the carriage of letters by mail steamer shall include a saving clause such as that last mentioned; (3) whether the Board of Trade has licensed, or will in future license, a British ship for the carriage of passengers which sails under any contract including such a clause as the following: "Such penalties to be inflicted from whatever cause the delay may arise," referring to penalties of from £2 1s. 2d. to £6 5s. for every hour of lateness in arrival after the appointed time. My object in putting this question is to annul one of the causes which at present tend to produce dangerous navigation of ships carrying mails and passengers. It is necessary to have penalties for non-fulfilment of contract in every business arrangement, but I contend that, in the case of a ship arriving later than the time contracted for, a saving clause should be inserted in the contract annulling the penalty when it can be proved that the delay is due to seamanlike care for the safety of the ship. The introduction of such a clause into the contract would not materially alter the usage which, I believe, has been generally followed by our own Government, who in every case where good reason for the delay has been shown have remitted the penalty. But the question is of vital importance, whether or not the conditions at present imposed upon the companies and upon their officers tend to promote running at a high speed when it is dangerous so to do; and it seems to me that a clause ought to be inserted in the contract providing, not for the non-exacting of a penalty by the forgiving of a crime, or an act which is penal, but for the annulling of penalty when it is proved that the lateness of arrival is due to seamanlike care. The insertion of such a clause would, I believe, bring about a decided diminution of the dangerous pressure brought to bear upon captains to run their vessels at too high speed for safety. I do

Lord Kelvin.

not suggest that the Home Government should dictate to the Cape Government in this matter, but I venture to think that the example of the introduction of such a clause into our contract would have a good effect in regard to the contracts entered into by the Cape and other Colonial Governments. The Board of Trade have a *locus standi* for taking this matter in hand. The Board of Trade refuse to license a ship for carrying mails and passengers if she is unseaworthy in any respect, and I would ask whether the Board of Trade consider that a ship would, when penalties are inflicted for delay, no matter from what cause the delay arises, be sailing under a system and under regulations suited for the safety of the mails and passengers. I do not expect any immediate action to be taken in the matter, but I do hope the consideration of the subject will be taken up by the Postmaster-General, the Colonial Office, and the Board of Trade.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (THE DUKE OF NORFOLK): My Lords, the question put by the noble Lord relates to the Department over which I preside, and also to the Board of Trade. I thought it desirable to submit to the Board of Trade a draft of the answer which I proposed to give, and as they approved of it I do not think I can do better than read that answer to the House. In regard to contracts made by Her Majesty's Postmaster-General for the conveyance of mails by sea, it has for many years been customary to provide in the sense advocated by the noble Lord. The clauses relating to over-time at sea are what are known as non-absolute; that is to say, there is a proviso that no deduction for delay shall be made from the subsidy if it can be shown to the satisfaction of the Postmaster-General that such delay arose from causes beyond the control of the contractors. It is the duty of all masters of packets to adopt all necessary measures and precautions for the safety of the mails—which duty, of course, necessitates care for the ship's safety. Delay caused by taking care of the ship would obviously come within the proviso mentioned already, and would not give rise to deduction. Similar provisions are believed to exist in regard to packet contracts made by colonial Governments. At all events, such is the

case in the current contract of the Cape Colony with the Castle and Union Companies, in which the rates of deduction mentioned in the third paragraph of the question are provided. Bonuses or premiums for extra speed are not now paid to packet contractors. I am informed by the Board of Trade that they could not withhold their certificate on the ground that words such as those quoted in the third paragraph occurred in a contract under which a steamer might be employed. A certificate granted for a passenger steamer by the Board applies solely to the vessel for which it is granted and her fitness for passengers on certain voyages within the time covered by the certificate. I understand the noble Lord to advocate that there should be a distinct clause rather than a clause modified by a proviso. I am not prepared to say, at the present moment, what special advantage would be derived from that clause, but I can assure the noble Lord that I am prepared to consider any clause he might draft. In my opinion, however, the safeguards already provided are sufficient to meet the case, and have been found hitherto to do so.

LONDON GOVERNMENT BILL.
COMMITTEE.

House in Committee (according to Order).

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2:—

THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN: The Amendment which I have to move to Clause 2 so alters the clause as to provide that no woman shall be eligible for the office either of alderman or of councillor. I feel very strongly upon the principle which is embodied in the clause as it stands, and I entertain a very strong objection to it upon two analogous but somewhat different grounds. I think the clause as it stands will not only be of no benefit, but will be of considerable detriment to us both in public and in private life. The principle involved in this clause is so novel and so large that it cannot, if it becomes law, be long confined to the bodies to be created under this Bill, but will very speedily extend over a much larger area of operations. In my opinion

a principle of this character ought not to be allowed to sidle its way into recognition on the Statute Book in a clause of a Bill, but ought to be brought before Parliament either as a small and distinct Bill, or by means of a Resolution, so that in some way Parliament could have an opportunity of considering the question in all its bearings. I trust that those of your Lordships who have the slightest doubt as to the wisdom of the principle will not forget that the clause found its way into the Bill in the other House of Parliament practically through an accident. It does not, therefore, come up to your Lordships with the sanction and weight of adequate discussion in the other House, nor with the support of any deliberate opinion expressed by that branch of the Legislature. The principle of removing the disqualification of sex and allowing women to sit as councillors and as aldermen on the new borough councils to be created in London is an absolutely new principle; or, if it is contended that it is only an extension of the present principle which prevails in the case of the vestries, it is, at any rate, so great an extension as to be tantamount to novelty. I think your Lordships will agree with me that if the disqualification is removed so far as the municipal bodies to be created in London are concerned, it will be absolutely impossible, with any show of reason or logic, to prevent its removal in connection with municipal bodies all over the country. If it is a good thing that this disqualification should be removed in the case of the London municipalities, on what possible principle can that good thing be withheld from the municipal councils and county councils in all the great cities and towns? And if it is a bad thing, what harm have these, as yet, uncreated London municipalities done that this experiment should be tried upon them? I do not think it will be possible, with any regard to logic or reason, to confine the operations of the clause to the position of councillors and aldermen, and I should like to know on what earthly principle a woman, if she can be an alderman, should not be a lord mayor, a mayor, or a chairman of a county council. I suppose women are excluded in this Bill from becoming mayors because the latter exercise judicial functions, but if you are going to enact that the women are eligible to sit as borough councillors and

as aldermen, I submit you will be forced very shortly to make them eligible as mayors and county councillors. I think I might really carry that argument still further. If you are going to allow women to exercise the functions of councillors and aldermen in connection with the new borough councils, that principle will of necessity extend to all the municipal councils throughout the country, and also, to be logical, to the Corporation of the City of London; and I fail to see how you can find any sound grounds on which to prevent them taking part in the legislation of the country, and sitting in Parliament. I admit that there is considerable difference between the functions of Parliament and those of the great municipalities, but still the latter bodies have to deal to a certain extent with legislation in the framing of bye-laws, and with enormous questions of finance and other matters so important that if you consider women qualified to sit upon these bodies, you will find it very difficult in the future to give a sound reason why they should not sit in Parliament also. However, I do not wish to press that point. All I want to impress upon your Lordships is this, that in voting for this clause, which says that disqualification of sex and marriage shall be removed so far as the borough councils to be created in London are concerned, you are in reality expressing an opinion that women are eligible, and should be elected as councillors and aldermen, not only on these new bodies, but on all the old existing bodies throughout the country, including among them the Corporation of the City of London and the London County Council. Well, my Lords, I think that is so large a departure from existing practice that it ought not to have been introduced as a clause in a Bill, but ought, as I have said, to have been brought before Parliament and the country as a distinct measure upon which Parliament could give a distinct and clear opinion. All that my Amendment does is to bring the new municipal bodies to be created into line with the municipal bodies already existing throughout the country. We are, under this Bill, extending to London the same principles which obtain all over the country, and I cannot understand on what principle this departure with reference to women is made in the case of London. It would be much more in accordance with our usual legislative methods if, in creat-

Lord Kenry.

ing municipal bodies in London, we carried out the main principles and the main details which govern municipal bodies in other parts of the country. It may be argued that as the greater contains the less, and as the new borough councils will take over the work and exercise the functions of the present vestries, the effect of my Amendment will be to deprive persons of statutory rights which they already possess in regard to the vestries. In the first place, there is an enormous difference between a municipal council and a vestry, and before dealing with that point I would remind your Lordships of the fact that the disqualification of sex and marriage was removed, so far as the London vestries were concerned, entirely by a mistake. Parliament was not in the least aware of what it was doing. Your Lordships will remember the long session of 1893-94. Parliament sat for a little over a year. It met on the 31st of January, 1893, and sat till March 3, 1894, and the Parish Councils Act of 1894 was debated at intervals all through that session. It was read the first time in the House of Commons in March, 1893, and the third time in this House in the same month of the following year. It was discussed on every stage, and was no less than 32 days in Committee in the other House. The Bill was debated in both Houses of Parliament until obviously Parliament scarcely knew whether it was on its head or its heels, and certainly did not understand the meaning of the later clauses which were introduced. I will, if your Lordships will permit me, briefly explain how women became eligible to sit on the vestries under the Local Government Act of 1894. The Bill as introduced abolished the qualification of guardians, but had nothing whatever to do with the London vestries. The anomalous position thus created as regards the property qualification was called attention to on the First Reading of the Bill by Sir Charles Dilke. It was commented upon on the Second Reading by Mr. James Stuart, Mr. Rowlands, and others. I do not want to trouble your Lordships with quotations, but the gist of the contention was that the property qualification, having been removed in one case, ought to be removed in another. Mr. Stuart said:

"One thing was certain, and that was that the property qualification for vestries would have to be abolished, and the electorate put.

upon all fours with the electorate of district councils."

Mr. Rowlands put the thing in a nutshell when he said :

"He felt very keenly the exclusion of London from the general provisions of the Bill, because if the measure became law London would be the only part of England in which the property qualification would remain for vestries."

That was the nature of the criticism on the Bill—namely, that the property qualification having been removed so far as the country was concerned, should also be removed in the case of the London vestries. Section 23 of the Bill, after a great deal of discussion, was passed, enabling women to sit on parish and district councils. Then came Section 29, which applied certain provisions of the Act—the provisions dealing with property qualification in respect of guardians—to the London vestries, but that section specially specified that except in that respect the provisions were not to apply to London. The result was that the property qualification still applied to the London vestries. To remedy that condition of things the Minister in charge of the Bill, Sir Henry Fowler, moved an Amendment, which eventually became Clause 31 of the Bill. That is the clause under which women became eligible to sit on the vestries, and it is perfectly obvious that the Amendment was moved for the purpose of meeting the objections to the fact that the property qualification remained in respect of the vestries. It abolished the property qualification, it abolished the ratepaying qualification for electors, and it also abolished the *ex officio* right of incumbents to be chairmen of vestries. I have carefully read the Debate that took place, and I find that the whole discussion centred upon those three points—the taking away of the property qualification, the ratepaying qualification for electors, and the *ex officio* right of incumbents to be chairmen of vestries. There was not a single allusion made to the fact that under that clause the disqualification of sex was also removed. Not a single word was said in any Debate which occurred, from the First Reading of the Bill in the other House to its Third Reading in your Lordships' House, to show that women would become qualified under the measure to sit upon the London vestries. In the last Debate

which took place in this House in Committee, the noble Earl opposite, the Leader of the Opposition, spoke about this particular clause in the Bill. He said he could not for the life of him see why persons in London who would be entitled to vote for members of sanitary districts, if they lived in the country, should be excluded from voting at the London vestry elections. The noble Earl spoke entirely about voting. He did not make the slightest allusion to the fact that the power was conferred upon women by this clause to sit upon the vestries. Neither did the noble Marquess, who spoke on the same occasion. It is not very strange, my Lords, that Parliament should not have understood the meaning of the clause. It was severely criticised by the Prime Minister, who said the noble Earl (the Earl of Kimberley) had been kind enough to give their Lordships his interpretation and view of what was intended to be done, but the drafting of the clause was so wonderful, said the noble Marquess, that he defied any human being who had not been provided with some special code of interpretation to discover what it meant. The noble Marquess said that probably the noble Earl possessed some cipher by which he understood what the draftsman meant. In the course of his speech the noble Marquess commented only upon the effect of the voting power of women, and did not refer for a single moment to the fact that the clause qualified women to sit upon the vestries. Seeing that, during the whole of the Debate, not a single reference was made to the fact that the clause would give this power, and that the noble Earl opposite, who had charge of the Bill, and the noble Marquess who criticised it, failed to perceive that the clause admitted women, I think I am justified in pressing it upon your Lordships that the fact that women now sit upon the London vestries is due entirely to an accident, and that Parliament, when it passed that clause, had not the slightest idea that the clause would have the effect it did. I ask your Lordships, therefore, to agree with me that there is no sound argument for saying that if my Amendment is carried in your Lordships' House any persons will be prevented from enjoying any right or privilege that Parliament ever intended they should possess. There is an enormous difference between the whole status of the London vestries

and the new municipal bodies to be created under this Bill. It is true that the borough councils will be largely occupied in carrying on the work of the vestries, but they will have a great deal more to do. They will exercise additional powers under the Adoptive Acts, and will have further powers transferred to them from the London County Council. In any case, the areas are in almost every instance considerably larger, and the borough councils will have to deal with matters much more complicated, financial and otherwise, than the vestries now have under their control; indeed, I submit that the whole object of this Bill is to create municipal bodies which should be superior to, and different from, the existing vestries and district boards. I do not think that any advantage to the public service can accrue from women sitting as councillors and aldermen. The work they would have to perform is not work which is congenial and natural to them. Women sit at present on Poor Law boards and deal with educational matters, and they perform invaluable service as factory inspectors. In all these matters I am sure the House will agree with me that the country has derived enormous benefit from the work of women, and that it owes them a great debt of gratitude for the energy and the intelligent manner in which they have on these bodies performed their duties. But these are matters women are particularly qualified to deal with; they are all matters in which humanitarianism comes into play. As Poor Law Guardians, members of educational bodies, and factory inspectors women have done admirable work, and the country can very ill afford to lose their services, and it is for that very reason that I do not desire women to be encouraged to go into work which is not congenial and which is unnatural to them. I never yet have understood that women take a particular delight in drains or are interested in paving, or derive much joy out of ascertaining the cubic contents of buildings. Neither do I understand that they take any interest in unravelling the intricacies of finance, or studying the stern simplicity of a balance-sheet. These are matters which men can attend to considerably better than women, and for many reasons. It is impossible for your Lordships to say that in passing this clause you are passing a permissive clause. If Parliament makes such a

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great change as this, it is tantamount to Parliament saying that it is desirable that women should do this kind of work. They can perform the work in which they are engaged, and to which I have referred, just as well as men, and in many respects better; but I believe you will be doing great harm to the conduct of our public affairs if, by retaining this clause as it is, you encourage women to embark upon work for which they are not fitted, and abandon work which they have shown themselves abundantly qualified to perform. There are all kinds of minor inconveniences in this Bill which I do not think I need particularly mention to your Lordships. For instance, a man is disqualified from sitting on a council if he is pecuniarily interested as a contractor. In such a case, can that man's wife sit upon the council? Would not that be rather contrary to the general spirit in which we regard the marriage relationship? Moreover, if the clause as it at present stands is adopted you will have to make some little modification in the English language, for your Lordships will scarcely, I am sure, tolerate the barbarism of speaking of a woman as an "alderman." "Alderman" is a good old-fashioned word, and means "an elder of the community." If you pass this clause you ought also to enact that in future "aldermen" shall be "old women." I am curious to know, if a lady should become Lord Mayor of London or an Alderman, whether her husband would derive any precedence, glory, honour, or title of any kind from the position held by his wife. These are comparatively unimportant matters, but when you see small matters of this kind which require a change in the general meaning of an old English word, you may be sure that, small as the matters are, they relate to something which goes very deep into the lowest strata of English society. I do not know that I need address your Lordships at any greater length, but I sincerely hope that the clause will not be allowed to remain in the Bill in its present form. If it is so allowed, I believe it will do a great deal of harm to the public service, and will prevent women from doing a great deal of good work which they now admirably perform, by inducing them to undertake work which is not suitable to them. I do not know that I would describe the position of things thus created in language

quite so vigorous as that which was used by the Prime Minister not very long ago. Lord Salisbury delivered a wisely humorous speech, which I am sure your Lordships will remember, at the recent banquet of the Royal Academy. He there said that he believed that if there were a Dante to write an artistic "Inferno," its lowest circle would be assigned to the ladies who dressed themselves in the divided skirts or knickerbockers. The noble Marquess went on :

"A few years hence those who are then alive will see all the principal ladies of their acquaintance as aldermen and common councillors."

I am glad, therefore, that I may feel confident of receiving the strong support of the noble Marquess in putting off to the furthest possible date the realisation of that horrible nightmare. I thank your Lordships for having listened to me with such patience, but I have spoken at this length because I feel that if you pass this clause you will not only be introducing the thin edge of the wedge, but that you will be driving the wedge home in such a way that some day or another it will be calculated to split the fabric of society. I think the enormous influence for good which women exercise, the great civilising influence that they possess, is due principally to the fact that they do not jostle men, and are not jostled by men in fulfilling the onerous duties which the possession of all these positions entails. I do not see how, if you agree to this clause, you can logically say that any disqualification of sex ought to be maintained in respect of any position, whether it be administrative, legislative, or executive. Whether that is a wise thing or an unwise thing to do is too large a question for me to go into. This is a matter which appeals more to intuition, perception, and instinct than to argument, and I will leave it to your Lordships' clear perception and common-sense to decide. I would, in conclusion, ask your Lordships to remember that in accepting my Amendment you are not disqualifying women from exercising any of the functions which they so adequately discharge now as Poor Law guardians and on the various other authorities, but that you are simply putting the new borough councils to be created in London upon the same lines as the other municipal bodies throughout the country. I beg to

move the Amendment which stands in my name.

Amendment moved—

"Page 1, line 19, leave out from 'councillors' to the end of the sub-section, and insert 'Provided that no woman shall be eligible for any such office.'—(*The Lord Kenry, E. Dunraven and Mount Earl.*)

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY): My Lords, my noble friend did me the honour to quote some observations that I made some time ago upon the dress of women. I have not the least objection to the quotation if he would make it correctly. I did not object to women being aldermen or common councillors any more than I object to their riding bicycles. What I objected to was their putting on an absurd and offensive and comical costume to do so. That is a matter which, however grave, hardly enters within the purview of this Bill. My noble friend introduced a simile to which we are very much accustomed—namely, the use of the thin end of the wedge. That is a very ancient simile, to which I render all homage, and I daresay I have often used it myself; but in order that that simile of the thin end of the wedge should be in the least applicable the end of the wedge must be inserted in the log upon which it is intended to operate. If the thin end of the wedge is inserted into a totally different log some distance away there is no fear to be apprehended for the welfare of the original log. Therefore, that suggestion is wholly irrelevant. If there are persons who really believe that, because you allow women to sit as members of these new bodies, you are therefore hastening the admission of them to the Parliamentary suffrage, I can only say that that is a system of argument I am wholly unable to understand. The two things have nothing whatever to do with each other. Whenever woman suffrage, if ever it does, comes up to be judged in this House, we shall know how to pay attention to the nature of the proposals that are made and to the conditions under which they are laid before us; but they are not before us now. There is not the slightest chance of their being discussed or passed, and it is merely leading us off on a false scent to ask us to discuss these things on this Bill.

My Lords, my noble friend evidently felt that his great difficulty was the action of the House of Commons and the action of Parliament, and he suggested a very original method of disposing of difficulties of that kind. If the House of Commons in this session, or Parliament in former sessions, has come to any conclusion distasteful to him, he says, "Oh, they did that by accident." Well, of course, that destroys the authority of Parliament altogether. If the House of Commons and the House of Lords are incapable in the course of twelve months of appreciating the fact that they are introducing so large a revolution as my noble friend depicts the admission of women to vestries to be, they are certainly unfit to be entrusted with the legislative business of this country, and in the same way this clause comes up to us with the sanction of the House of Commons, which has been given twice and once refused. It seems to me very irrelevant and trivial to say that the refusal was given after dinner and the acceptance was given before dinner; but that is really the only ground upon which it is possible to criticise the decision of the House of Commons. We must take the decisions as they reach us. The suggestion that if a Division was taken suddenly only the friends of women would be found in the lobby, and those who are against women would be better employed elsewhere, is not respectful either to them or to the House of Commons. I think my noble friend has given your Lordships what seems to me an entirely false view of the clause which he is opposing. He represents it as a great innovation and as introducing something that is absolutely new. What it does is to give to women precisely the same access to the new municipal councils which they have to the vestries at present. These councils differ very little from the vestries. It is not pretended that they do. They have one or two additional powers, one of very great importance, to which I shall refer in a moment—namely, the housing of the working classes; but beyond that the change is only a change of the area of jurisdiction and a change of name; and because of a mere change of name you are asked to strike off women who are now serving. It really amounts to a Parliamentary condemnation to turn them out of the seats and jurisdiction they have hitherto held and exercised, and that not

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on the ground that they have been unworthy of the trust reposed in them or that they have done harm with the powers entrusted to them. That seems to me so violent a step that some cause should be shown for it. It is not enough to tell me that a new name has been given to the bodies to which they belonged. I gather from my noble friend that he fears there is something infectious in a name, and that if these bodies are called municipal councils in London, and women sit on them, straightway all over the country women will start up and want to sit on the municipal councils in all the other towns. Is it really contended that our institutions are constructed on this logical basis? Are there no cases in which a different arrangement has come down from other times, so that bodies having the same name have, in many respects, different powers and different constitution? You are perfectly aware, my Lords, that there are, and that the mere fact that the new London bodies are called municipal councils will no more introduce women into the municipal bodies of Manchester and Birmingham than it will change them into some unknown animal. It is ridiculous to suppose that so great a change will come over municipal bodies, because what were formerly called vestries in London are now called municipal councils, and because these bodies contain women, that therefore women will sit on municipal bodies in provincial towns. It is so absurd an assumption that you cannot possibly deal with it as affording sufficient ground for condemning women who have already performed the duties cast upon them by Parliament, or for suggesting that they have performed those duties badly, or for repealing the powers which five years ago were so deliberately conferred upon them by Parliament. I think merely on the ground of justice that would be a most objectionable thing. But there is a good deal more than justice. My noble friend had the hardihood to say that the new duties imposed on women were alien to their nature and capacity. He said: "You must not tell me that they are on boards of guardians, because there a humanitarian element enters." Has he noticed the fact that one of the main duties of these bodies will be to provide for the housing of the working classes? Is there no humanitarian element in that? On the contrary, my

Lords, I believe it is one of the most burning and difficult questions with which our future local governments will have to deal. The difficulty increases year by year. It is not the first time we have discussed it in this House. Many years ago, at the request of this House, a Commission was appointed to examine into the condition of the lodging of the working classes, and the result which that Commission reported was most unsatisfactory and, I should add, most alarming, and yet things have got worse since. The difficulty of the conditions is that the ordinary economic laws do not come into play. You are yourselves obliged constantly to destroy vast masses of poor men's dwellings, and every effort to provide an adequate substitute has hitherto, I am afraid, been a failure. And it is not only that. There is a constant flow of the working-class population from the country to the town. They all press, as it is natural they should, near the scene of their employment and their work. To remove them far from the scene of their work is a very great hardship, and rather than incur this hardship they will submit to conditions of lodging in which health and decency, one would almost say morality, are surrounded with the most fatal difficulties. This is an evil which has been so much discussed that I need not press it on your Lordships, but it is an evil with which these local bodies will have, above all things, to contend. The London County Council itself has undertaken part of the duty, but it will not be only on the London County Council that this duty will fall—the duty of providing, I will not say of providing but of striving to provide, adequate lodging for the vast multitudes who inhabit this city. It is one of the principal duties which these municipal bodies will have to perform, and you ought to arm them with every weapon and every assistance that may enable them to perform it with success. Now, I maintain that women are as necessary for the purpose of assisting these local bodies to provide decent lodging for the working classes as they are for the purpose of administering the Poor Law. It is quite as essential, and a far more pressing and urgent duty. And it is an entire misapprehension to suppose that this work is removed further from their ordinary functions or the capacity which they possess. These women are, I may say—I am anxious, in dealing with the matter, not to use words

of exaggeration, but I think it is true to say that women are in closer touch—these women who give attention to the working classes are in closer touch with them than any man can be. What touch there is, what contact there is, between the working classes and the classes that are above them—apart from matters of business—passes almost entirely through the hands of women. All the charitable work—I will not say charitable, because it conveys, perhaps, an unjust interpretation—but all the sympathetic work, and the knowledge of their daily life, is, to a very large extent, the possession and the privilege of women, and not of men. They are in touch with the working classes more, I think, than men. They are able to guide the bodies on which they sit in the administration of those parts of the law which most closely concern the social life and the moral existence of the working classes, and you will be sacrificing a very great instrument of good if you remove from these councils those who are able to guide the administrators charged with the execution of the law in a way in which they can only be guided by those who know the wants, and not only the wants but the wishes, of the working classes themselves. My Lords, there is another consideration on which I can only dwell lightly, but we ought not to leave it out of account. The vestries have not hitherto enjoyed a very high reputation. They have been accused—I know not whether justly—of using their prerogative more for the purpose of protecting their own interests than of advancing those interests which are committed to their charge. Whether that be true or not I do not know, but it seems to me that in the presence of a woman on those councils you have a security against indolence, against selfish administration, which you will not have if they are removed. They—to use the words of my noble friend—are impressed with the humanitarian element. They feel the terrible evils with which vast multitudes in this city are oppressed. They are moved to act in those matters less by motives of a secondary character and more by the highest philanthropy than the men by whose side they sit, and if you remove them from the council chamber you are taking away from that council one of the highest, one of the most constant, and one of the most reliable stimulants to a true, and honest, and

unflagging administration of the law. These, my Lords, seem to me considerations of the highest moment. The power with which you have armed these bodies is in the present state of London one of the most momentous powers which they can be called upon to exercise. It is not right to remove from them any condition which will help them in the execution of their duties unless you are led to do so by motives of clear and overwhelming cogency. Such motives, I maintain, do not exist. It is nothing but a name—in order to secure the identical meaning of a name you are asked to drive these women from the council chamber; you are asked to prevent the influence which they have hitherto exercised, and which they will in the future exercise, I believe, in a much higher and more beneficial degree; you are asked to prevent them merely for a technicality—for a pedantic similarity of meaning in the name of two different organisations. I regret very much that I know I am opposed in this matter by many with whom I usually act. I earnestly deprecate the idea that there is anything in the name or principles of Conservatism which is opposed to making these councils as efficient as they can be made for the beneficent purposes for which they are to be set up. I earnestly protest against that idea. I protest against our being asked to differ with the other House of Parliament on a matter of this kind, to refuse to make use of all the instruments of good that lie to our hands, and to do so from motives which are of a trivial character and from apprehensions which do not deserve a moment's thought. Whatever may be the feelings of others, for myself I cannot refuse to vote for that course which will help forward in some degree, it may be to a great degree, a high and noble cause, and which is the course of right, of justice, and of true philanthropy.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (The EARL OF HALSBURY): My Lords, I regret very much that I am obliged to differ on this subject from my noble friend at the head of the Government, but the argument of the noble Marquess I am unable to follow. That the question is far wider and more important than my noble friend regards it the crowded and unwonted state of the benches furnishes conclusive evidence. Does anybody in their senses believe that if the only question involved

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in this matter was whether a woman was to become an alderman or not the state of the House would be what it is at this moment? When I look at the state of the House I recognise the fact that it is felt on both sides that the question at issue is not less momentous than this—whether or not, for all purposes and in respect of all political power, distinction of sex or disqualification of sex shall be maintained. This is a matter of great delicacy, but I venture to remind your Lordships that this clause had not found its way into the Bill when it was originally introduced by the Government. It occurs to me that, when this Government Bill was first introduced, those who had to consider this question must have had it before their minds. Yet the Bill was introduced without this clause, the history and importance of which is well known. The profession of faith which is involved in the retention of this small clause is not made very prominent. I would ask the right hon. Member for Bodmin, if he were here, whether this is or is not part of the change in the Constitution which he and his friends recommend—namely, that women should be admitted to the franchise, and that they should vote—

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: Certainly not.

*THE LORD CHANCELLOR: I am delighted to hear my noble friend say that. Of course, my noble friend's view is entitled to great weight and authority; but its importance is I think, considerably diminished by the observation which I have succeeded in eliciting. I do not follow my noble friend in the view he takes that the change will rest here. Where is the line at which we are going to stop? What argument that has been advanced, or suggestion that has been made, will not be equally applicable to the question of a Parliamentary vote? I quite admit the distinction between government and administration, and no one can appreciate more strongly than I do the admirable work women have done in administration as distinguished from government. I cannot, however, help admiring the wonderful subtlety with which my noble friend introduced his observations about the housing of the working classes, from which I suppose no one will for a moment differ, and wove them into his defence of

this particular clause. If one has not good and cogent arguments for the proposition one endeavours to maintain, it is very wise in rhetoric to introduce something else as to which there will be no contradiction, and then assume that the one thing involves the other. It seems to me that that is what the noble Marquess did. I have myself to make confession on this matter. I admit that at one time I took a different view, and thought that it was an anomaly in our Constitution that the possession of property should give a vote to one sex and not to the other. If I may venture to say so, it was not an unnatural mistake, but my experience in political life for the last 10 or 20 years has taught me that I was mistaken, and therefore I come forward and confess myself, in a white sheet, as a penitent. When I refer to my past political experience your Lordships will understand that I mean the attitude assumed by women in regard to various public questions that have come before us. There are some questions on which, for obvious reasons, I do not desire to enter. The attitude of women on the Turkish question, the temperance question, the vaccination question, as well as one or two others that I would rather not discuss, has convinced me that those very qualities which are exhibited in the burning zeal of a woman to do what she believes to be right, so that she will accept of no compromise—will accept nothing that is not perfect—render her a dangerous guide in political questions. That is no derogation to women's character, on the contrary what makes them the light and charm of human life is the possession of these qualities; but the fact that they will neither consider ways and means nor those considerations of statesmanship without some portion of which no State, I believe, can long continue, renders them unfit to be entrusted with political power. It seems to me that when once you invest women with political power it is not true to say that you will get the average women; those who put themselves forward as representing their sex will not be the best. Unfortunately, also, it is not unlikely that those who would shrink from advancing into political life may be influenced by others. It seems to me that those elements of citizenship—the possession of an independent mind, and the power to act according to one's lights with both

prudence and courage—are not qualities which we can expect from women. I regret that for these reasons I am unable to take the same view as my noble friend. I think this is a most serious constitutional change, and my Conservatism undoubtedly does recognise the fact that the Constitution, which has been supported and guided by men, is a Constitution with which it is extremely unwise to tamper, and it would be a most unwise thing to hand over half the government of this great country to women. Then there are the difficulties that may arise with reference to a vote for married women. I know it may be said that I am not arguing the question now before the House. That is the whole point between us; I say that this is the question with which we have to deal. It is part of a dangerous policy, and I shall therefore vote against my noble friend, for the first time, I believe, since I have been in this House.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: My Lords, if I thought this was a question of granting political franchise to women, with all the consequences which might follow, I certainly should take the same view as the noble and learned Lord who has just sat down. I am not, and never have been, in favour of granting political franchise to women. It is, no doubt, an extremely convenient thing, and a very good rhetorical artifice, to introduce into the discussion a question which, in my opinion, does not really belong to it. It seems to me there is a wide distinction between allowing women to perform the duties which they might perform if they became members of these councils, and allowing them to perform duties of an entirely different nature—namely, legislative duties. To my mind the point that was cogently put by the noble Marquess opposite ought to weigh even with those who might have doubts whether it is expedient in itself that women should be members of these councils—I mean the point that they already in the vestries enjoy the privilege. As to the Bill of 1894, one clause says in distinct terms that the members of urban district councils may be women, and another clause applies that without reservations to the members of vestries. There could be no mistake about it; it was not by a sidewind, it was put openly and distinctly by the Act, and no one who took part in the

discussion could be under the smallest doubt that that was the distinct pledge and well-known intention of the Government which brought in the Bill, and to which I belonged. I entirely agree with the noble Marquess opposite that it is contrary to our usual practice, and I think to an ordinary sense of justice, that having given to women the privilege of sitting upon certain bodies, you should take that privilege away when you merely change the names of those bodies, and add a few new powers which certainly women are as well able, if not more able, to exercise as any other members of the vestries. There is not one tittle of allegation that they have misused their power, or one argument to show that they are not as well fitted to discharge the duties of these local bodies as the duties of the school boards or of the boards of guardians. I draw a wide distinction between that and the political franchise. I believe that women are quite well qualified to deal with many of the subjects which come before these local bodies, and I agree with the noble Marquess that it would be a great misfortune if you excluded them from these bodies in London. I think there are a great many people who are terribly frightened by the famous old argument about the thin end of the wedge; but I must confess I am not very much disturbed by that; if I were I should not vote in favour of this clause. I believe the existing privilege they enjoy is a useful one, which ought to be maintained, and I am further distinctly of opinion that no one who votes in favour of maintaining the clause as it now stands commits himself in the slightest degree to giving political franchise to women.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE): My Lords, my noble friend at the head of the Government has said that in the views he has expressed he does not find himself in accordance with many of those with whom he usually acts; but I do not think he stated as clearly as was stated by the Leader of the other House that this question is one upon which, as a Government, the Government are not prepared to advise Parliament; votes, therefore, will be uninfluenced by Party allegiance. No doubt that position has been made quite clear by the speech of my noble and learned friend beside me (the Lord Chancellor); but I may say

Earl of Kimberley.

that, so far as I am aware, the only members of the Government who are strongly opposed to the Amendment are, I admit, two of its most distinguished members, but they are not, I think, supported by any of their colleagues. In what I say on this subject I shall confine myself to it as affecting the Bill itself, apart from the more general question that has been raised. The question is one which presents difficulty only to one side of opinion on the subject of women's rights. Of course, all those who are in favour of a wide or the widest extension of those political rights are strongly in favour of anything that admits them to, or claims for them, any new privilege approaching a political character; it is only to those of us who are, generally speaking, opposed to a wide extension of this kind that the question presents any difficulty at all. We none of us desire to deprive women of any of those privileges or duties they so admirably discharge in connection with the administration of the Poor Law and of education; but the one argument addressed to us for the Bill as it stands and against the Amendment is that women are already qualified to sit as members of vestries, and that, inasmuch as vestries are to disappear and to be replaced by municipalities, they will no longer be possessed of that privilege. But that argument applies to a great number of people besides women. The effect of the Bill will be to replace by a number of other people several hundreds of vestrymen, many of whom have admittedly discharged their duties well and efficiently. If you are going to look at the question from the point of view of the privileges of a certain class or of certain persons you must not confine your attention to the case of women alone; you must extend your attention to the privileges of vestrymen who are necessarily under the Bill going to be disqualified from the further performance of duties they have hitherto well discharged. You have, however, decided to abolish vestries and to replace them by bodies governing larger areas; and you are bound, in my opinion, to accept the consequences of the change. You cannot retain the incidents of the old system and ignore those of the new. It would be most unfortunate for the future working of this measure if you were from the outset to stamp these new municipalities you are

going to create, and which you are doing all in your power to make closely resemble those now existing all over the country—if you stamp them from the outset with this obvious inequality, saying, as in fact you do say if you pass this clause without the Amendment, that whatever you may choose to call these new bodies they simply are vestries under a new name, and your intention is that they shall remain vestries. It is argued that women are as well qualified as men to discharge the duties of councillors and aldermen, not only on these, but on other municipalities. In reply to that, I agree with the noble Earl who moved the Amendment that this is not the time, nor the place, nor is this the measure upon which so great and far reaching a change ought to be proposed. It is absolutely certain that this extension will be made the basis of a demand—whether successful or not it is not possible for me to say—but it certainly will be made the basis of a demand for the extension of the privilege to women on all municipal councils, and, notwithstanding what has fallen from my noble friend at the head of the Government, I personally should have great difficulty in finding a logical argument that would enable me, if I resisted this Amendment, to refuse a demand made in respect to other municipalities. I confess I am not prepared to assent to the establishment of a principle of such importance, at any rate until I know more of the feelings of municipal councils themselves and the constituencies they represent. My noble friend says we can go thus far and stop here, but that is not our experience in respect to the agitation for the extension of women's political privileges. Concession has been followed by other claims; women obtained the municipal franchise, and the question was immediately asked, Why should they not have the Parliamentary franchise also? So, again, it being decided that women were qualified to be members of vestries, that concession is taken advantage of to found a claim to be considered qualified as members of municipalities and as aldermen. I cannot help thinking that when you have given the right which you will give if you reject this Amendment the question will certainly be asked, Why should you prevent women from representing the people in Parliament also? Whatever the decision of Parliament may ultimately be, it is a question a great deal

too large, a great deal too wide, to be decided incidentally in a measure of this character, and is one which ought to be brought forward as a separate measure, and decided on its merits; and I certainly think further demands ought not to be raised on the very inadequate foundation that women have in the past made good members of vestries, and are therefore necessarily qualified for the more important and responsible positions on borough councils. For these reasons I, without hesitation, shall certainly support the Amendment which has been moved by the noble Earl.

THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF YORK :

My Lords, there is one consideration, to which attention has not been drawn, which is of some importance, and may go some way to allay the somewhat wild alarm of more than one speaker who has addressed your Lordships, and it is this, that the ultimate decision of the question will rest, as it ought to rest, with the people, who will be under no constraint whatever to elect a single woman as a councillor. The result of the elections will show whether we have mistaken the feeling of the constituencies or not. If we find that they elect very few or no women to be members of the new borough councils, it will show that the Amendment was justified; but I believe the result will be very different, and it is because I believe this will be so that I feel bound to vote in favour of the retention of the clause as it at present stands. Observations have been made in the course of this Debate which seem to disparage the power and fitness of women to deal with the important questions which will come before the new borough councils. I will not repeat the argument that they have already been occupied in dealing with a number of these questions as members of vestries, but taking the larger question as affecting the comfort, happiness, and housing of the poor, which I do not admit is in any degree irrelevant to this discussion, I cannot forget that, after, perhaps, the great name of the late Lord Shaftesbury, more has been done to promote the comfort and well-being of the poorer classes of London by women, two or three of whom are happily still alive, than has been done in the last 20 or 30 years by any association of men. The capacity shown by women in successfully dealing with such questions proves

that they are qualified for places on the new councils, and I think we shall be doing right in rejecting the Amendment which has been submitted by the noble Earl.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDON-DERRY: My Lords, I have had the privilege for two years, ending only last year, of presiding over one of the most important public boards in the whole of the Empire—I allude to the London School Board. At that time there were four ladies who represented constituencies on that Board—I believe the number is larger now—and they discharged work of an extremely useful character on the committees to which they were allotted. They frequently took part in our weekly debates, and their speeches were always of a thorough and explicit character, and enjoyed the additional advantage of never being too long. I frequently found that if the Debates had somewhat wandered away from the question under discussion, but not so far that I felt myself compelled to intervene, the lady members always brought them back into the original channel and gave them a thoroughly practical turn. I had the advantage, during those two years, of visiting various parts of London which were represented on the School Board by these ladies, and I therefore had the opportunity of seeing the enormous good they were doing in details connected with education and other work of, to use the words of the noble Marquess, a humanitarian character, and which I do not think they would have had the means of performing had they not the prestige and the influence of being members of the London School Board. There are, as your Lordships are aware, what are called “go-betweens” between the members of the London School Board and the teachers—a large number of ladies and gentlemen known as School Board managers. These managers do splendid work, and, of the vast number of managers, upwards of 500 are women. I venture to bring this matter before your Lordships because, when we have women doing this good work on school boards and upon local governing bodies, it seems hard to deprive them of the opportunity of doing similar work on the bodies about to be created. I know something of the good work done by women in the overcrowded districts in the metropolis, and of the influence

Archbishop of York.

they have brought to bear on their fellow women in their homes. That influence, I am convinced, has had, and will continue to have, a great share in lessening the rate of mortality. I can endorse what the right rev. Prelate has said will be the opinion of the electors in the future if this clause is allowed to stand as at present. The electors have embraced the opportunity afforded them under the Act of 1893 to return a large number of women to the public boards, and under the new Local Government Act in Ireland there are already 4 women members on urban district councils, 27 on rural district councils, and 82 on boards of guardians. I would ask your Lordships not, by passing the Amendment, to stultify your previous action, but to allow women on the new bodies to do a still greater work than they have yet had an opportunity of doing. As to giving women the Parliamentary franchise, I certainly do not say that, if they are permitted to become councillors and aldermen, they may not desire to be given the Parliamentary franchise, and I do not deny for one moment that there are many women who are more qualified to enjoy it than men; but that does not alter my extreme objection to any measure of that sort. I consider that the extension of the Parliamentary franchise to women would be disastrous to Parliament and to the country, and, whilst in favour of having them as members of school boards and local government bodies, I would retain to myself the right of doing the utmost I can to oppose the extension to them of the Parliamentary franchise. I give my most hearty support to the clause as it stands, and shall vote against the Amendment when the Division is taken.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND: My Lords, the speech which has just been delivered, however convincing it may have been, was a speech in favour of extending to women seats upon all municipal councils, and every word uttered by the noble Marquess was an entire corroboration of the argument that you cannot stop here. I will yield to no one in my appreciation of the work which women have done in the way of educating people in sanitary matters in our great towns, but much of that valuable

work has been done by women who have not had seats on the public bodies. I need only mention the name of Miss Octavia Hill, who has done more for this metropolis, perhaps, than almost any other woman, and she has done the whole of that work without a seat on any Board so far as I am aware. I want for one moment to bring this Debate into the narrowest compass. I do not wish to discuss whether this Amendment will, or will not, lead to further change. I wish to put before the House one or two considerations with regard to the measure itself. It seems to be an unfortunate incident associated with this metropolis that legislation with regard to it has for a long time been in an experimental stage. This is unavoidable, because you have no precedent to go upon. The size of London renders it an exception to all rules, and, therefore, you have been obliged to try one experiment after another. You tried the Metropolitan Board of Works, which was not altogether, I believe, an unmitigated success. You then tried the County Council, and no one who was present at the Second Reading of this Bill, and who witnessed the manner in which the Bill was received by noble Lords opposite, could have failed to observe that even from them it received a certain amount of acceptance, and that the worst they had to say was to damn it with faint praise. Therefore, I take it that a change of some sort or kind is again admitted to be necessary, and until the noble Marquess spoke to-night I imagined that it was the intention of the Government to convert the vestries into municipalities, with all the importance of municipalities, so far as the peculiar conditions of the case would allow. It was impossible, no doubt, to give them all the powers possessed by municipalities in the provinces; but, while you were unable to put them on an equality with other municipalities in every respect, I believed you were going to give them all the dignity and privileges of those municipalities in order to attract the best men to serve upon them. The noble Marquess has informed the House that the proposal is merely to call the vestries municipalities, and to give them a few slight additional powers, and he says it is very hard, therefore, to take away from women the powers they at present exercise when so very little change is to be made. I confess that I hardly understand why, if that is really the

nature of the Bill, the Government have considered it such a very important measure as to spend so much time upon it in the other House. I prefer to think this is an honest attempt to magnify these bodies in every way possible, and to make them equal to the other municipalities, and I contend that you will stultify your action if you give them a franchise or representation which is different from that of any other important body in the country. By so doing you will be saying, in other words: "We propose to call you municipalities because we think you are vain enough to like it better than the term 'vestry'; we are giving you aldermen and other titles, but you are to be in effect what you have always been—a vestry, and not a municipality." I cannot help thinking that this is a very unwise course. Although the noble Marquess rather deprecated our referring to what happened in the Lower House, I venture to think we are allowed to use the knowledge which comes to us through the public prints of what goes on in the other House upon any question of this kind, and to form our own judgment. That being so, I cannot refrain from saying that if your Lordships vote against this Amendment you will be taking advantage of what was really a chance vote in the House of Commons. An effort was made to have the question reconsidered in the other House, but the forms of the House made that inconvenient. I contend that your Lordships should have a mind of your own, and not follow the lead of the other House. We are often told that this is a House for revision, and I think we may all admit that if ever there was an occasion on which we should give the Lower House an opportunity of again considering this question, surely this is the occasion. In conclusion, I would like just to point out that if you admit women to the new municipalities you will be taking an irrevocable step. On the other hand, if you adopt the Amendment, you will not take an irrevocable step, because it will be open to you, supposing the House of Commons returns the Bill with the clause reinstated, to adopt it.

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LORD TWEEDMOUTH: Though the Amendment of which I have given notice looks a formidable one, it is not meant to be so. It endeavours to set out clearly what is to be gathered by inference from the clause as drafted. It is an inconvenient practice of Parliamentary draughtsmen, instead of stating clearly what the particular provision is, to refer you to several other Acts of Parliament, and compel you to gather from them the meaning of the clause. I have endeavoured to understand the references, and have obtained the best legal assistance, but it seems that there may be two interpretations as to the qualifications necessary for election to the office of alderman. It may be, on the one hand, that he is to be a person who may be elected a county councillor, or, on the other hand, a person who is fit to be a member of the borough council. I have come to the conclusion that the former is really what is intended to be the qualification. It does seem to me that, if I have found difficulty in understanding what the qualification of an alderman is to be, some reason exists for thinking that great difficulty will also be experienced in this direction when the Bill is passed, unless the matter is cleared up. It may be that I have set the qualifications out wrongly. I am very sorry if that is the case, but I do not at all wish to insist upon my words. The object of my Amendment is simply to draw from those who are in charge of the Bill their assent to the principle that it is desirable to set out in the Bill definitely and clearly what the qualifications necessary for aldermen in the new borough councils will be.

Amendment moved—

"In page 2, line 1, leave out sub-section (4) and insert the following sub-sections:

'(4)—(i.) The aldermen shall be fit persons elected by the council from among persons qualified to be London county councillors, provided that women, whether married or single, shall, if otherwise qualified, be eligible for election.

'(ii.) If a councillor is elected to and accepts the office of alderman, he vacates his office of councillor.

'(iii.) The term of office of an alderman shall be six years.

'(iv.) On the ordinary day of election of alderman in every third year, one-half of the whole number of alderman shall go out of office, and their places shall be filled by election.

'(v.) The half to go out shall be those who have been aldermen for the longest time without re-election.

'(5)—(i.) The mayor of a metropolitan borough shall be a fit person elected by the council from among the aldermen or councillors, or persons qualified to be such, provided that a woman shall not be a mayor.

'(ii.) An outgoing alderman is eligible.

'(iii.) The term of office of a mayor shall be one year, but he shall continue in office until his successor has accepted office, and made and subscribed the required declaration.

'(iv.) He shall, by virtue of his office, be a justice of the peace for the County of London, but before acting as such justice he shall, if he has not already done so, take the oaths required by law to be taken by a justice of the peace other than the oath respecting qualification by estate.

'(v.) Sections 60 and 61 of the Municipal Corporations Act, 1882, shall apply to the election of aldermen and mayors under this Act, provided that aldermen shall not as such vote at the election of an alderman."—
 (*The Lord Tweedmouth.*)

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: It is not, I think, for me to defend on this

occasion the principle on which Government Bills are now drafted, and I am inclined very much to agree with my noble friend that to the non-legal mind, at all events, the form is extremely inconvenient. Your Lordships would, however, hardly be inclined at this stage of the Bill to set about re-drafting it. A large number of controversial issues would certainly be raised if the clause went back to the other House in the form proposed by my noble friend. As to the substance of the clause, I do not believe there is any fundamental difference between us, and I am advised that there is no doubt whatever about the qualifications in question. Any person is qualified to be an alderman who is rated in respect of property occupied within the borough, or who has the ownership qualification in any part of the County of London.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: Do I understand that property ownership in any part of the County of London would qualify a person to hold the office of alderman in any of the borough councils?

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: Yes.

LORD DAVEY: My Lords, I much regret that the Government cannot see their way to accept the Amendment. If the House could only realise the amount of trouble, confusion, and difficulty which is occasioned to those who have in judicial places to interpret the law in consequence of this referential form of legislation, I am sure the Government would determine to set out plainly on the face of the Bill the nature of the enactments which they mean to make, instead of leaving them to be ascertained by looking through a number of other Acts of Parliament. If it is difficult for persons skilled in the interpretation of Statutes to understand it, how much more difficult is it for those who are not acquainted with Acts of Parliament? If a man wants to find out whether he is qualified for the position of alderman or councillor, and the conditions of the office he wishes to seek, he looks in this Bill, and he looks in vain. I contend that it is absolutely impossible for a person unskilled in the interpretation of Acts of Parliament to discover without assistance what the qualifications are, and I think it would be much better to state them clearly on the face of the Bill.

Duke of Devonshire.

On Question, "That Sub-section 4 shall stand part of the clause," agreed to.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: The next Amendment I have to move is to reduce the number necessary to constitute a quorum of the new bodies from one-third to one-fourth. With a quorum of one-third it would be necessary to have 24 members present in order to do any business, and this number seems to me extremely high for the purpose of transacting the ordinary routine work which comes on at the beginning and at the end of the meetings of these bodies. A fourth of the members of the London County Council constitutes a quorum, and in the case of boards of guardians it is laid down that a third shall be the quorum, provided that in no case the number need exceed seven. This clause, as I have said, would require a quorum of 24 out of 70. My proposal is that the quorum should be 18 out of 70. The change I am asking the noble Duke to agree to is a very small one, and one which will facilitate the business of these councils and enable the work to be carried on much more expeditiously than could be the case if the clause is passed as it at present stands.

Amendment moved—

"In page 2, line 16, to leave out 'one-third' and insert 'one-fourth.'"—(*The Lord Tweedmouth.*)

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: My Lords, the Bill follows the provisions of the Municipal Corporations Act in the matter of the quorum, and I see no reason for departing from well-established precedent. I do not believe that in any case there will be difficulty in securing a quorum of one-third. One of the objects in adopting this proportion is to endeavour to secure a better attendance than has hitherto been usual in the case of vestries, and we have every reason to believe that the councils elected under this Act will, if only from a wholesome dread which they may feel of their constituents, be more regular in their attendance. I think it would not be advisable to depart from the precedent of the Municipal Corporations Act, and therefore I cannot accept the Amendment.

On Question, "That the word 'one-third' shall stand part of the clause," agreed to.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: My Lords, I have a separate sub-section to insert, with the object of clearing up a point that is in doubt in this Bill. Under the various Acts there are different periods within which the acceptance of office must be specified. The period prescribed by the Vestrymen and Auditors Election Order for acceptance of office by vestrymen is one month. The period fixed for existing vestrymen will apply to the new councillors, and it is proposed to adopt the same period in the case of the mayors and aldermen.

Amendment moved—

"In page 2, after line 17, insert as a separate sub-section, 'The mayor and an alderman of a metropolitan borough shall be required to accept office within the same period as is allowed in the case of a councillor.'"—(*The Lord President of the Council.*)

On Question, "That this sub-section shall be here inserted," agreed to.

Clause 2, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 3, amended, and agreed to.

Clause 4 :—

***LORD WELBY:** My Lords, the Amendment which I have to move to Clause 4 will, I hope, find acceptance at the hands of the noble Duke. The clause transfers to the new borough councils the powers hitherto possessed by the vestries and district boards. Among those are the powers of raising loans, and that power is exercised in most instances subject to the sanction of the London County Council. The Bill, as it was amended by Her Majesty's Government, kept that power of sanction to the London County Council, and only added this restriction—that, in case of their refusal, there should be an appeal to the Local Government Board. Later in the day, however, a further Amendment was moved in the House of Commons by the hon. Member for South St. Pancras, and accepted by the Government, which provided that if the London County Council did not, within six months after the application to them, give their sanction to a loan, an appeal

should lie to the Local Government Board. I cannot help thinking that there is a certain slight of the London County Council in the insertion of such a provision as that. It is, if I may so call it, a punitive provision which assumes that the County Council unnecessarily delays dealing with applications for loans. I understand that the hon. Member who moved this clause in the House of Commons supported it by reference to a statement that the County Council had unduly delayed for a long period various applications for loans which had been made to them. I have had an opportunity of investigating the number of loans for which the Parish of St. Pancras have applied, and I cannot help thinking that the hon. Member made his statement under a very great misapprehension. By far the larger number of the loans which St. Pancras applied for were granted in a very short time, and without any delay. There were a few which extended over the period of six months, but in each case there exists a very fair explanation. The explanation is that St. Pancras applied to the London County Council prematurely, and before the works in respect of which the loans were to be taken up were ready to be commenced. In other cases where delays have arisen the London County Council have had very good reason for not giving their sanction. Mr. Courtney's Commission reported that the power exercised by the County Council in this direction was not exercised in what they called an arbitrary manner, and I may add further that our requirements, before we give our sanction to loans, are those which the Local Government Board insist upon. I hope that the noble Duke will see his way to remove this punitive provision, and insert after the word "made," the words "with necessary particulars." Delays are often caused through the local authorities not supplying the necessary particulars when they make application for loans.

Amendment moved—

"In page 3, line 17, after 'made' to insert 'with necessary particulars.'"—(*The Lord Welby.*)

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: I am advised that the words which the noble Lord proposes to insert are unnecessary, because the Local Government Board

would not countenance appeals if the necessary particulars had not been supplied. In such a case the application could hardly be held to be a proper application. Therefore I cannot accept the Amendment.

***THE EARL OF HARDWICKE:** Having the honour of a seat upon the Finance Committee of the London County Council, I feel with Lord Welby that the reference which was made to the London County Council and the Finance Committee by Captain Jessel, when he spoke in the House of Commons in reference to this matter, did imply that the Finance Committee were rather lax in attending to the matter of sanctioning loans. As a matter of fact, the contrary is the case. The applications for loans are dealt with by the Committee as speedily as possible, and, so far as St. Pancras is concerned, it is well known by members of the Finance Committee that it is extremely difficult to get that Vestry to comply with the very necessary requirements of the Committee, and to supply the particulars of the different improvements to carry out which they desire to borrow money. I am sorry Her Majesty's Government do not see their way to accept this Amendment, because it will give the new borough councils who apply for a loan, and withhold the necessary particulars, thereby causing delay, power to apply to the Local Government Board at the end of six months and say that the County Council have not given their consent, when, as a matter of fact, the delay had been caused by the withholding of the necessary particulars on the part of the new Borough Council.

LORD WOLVERTON: As a member of the Finance Committee of the London County Council, I should like to endorse what has fallen from the noble Earl who has just spoken. From my experience on that Committee, I can safely say that there has been no unnecessary delay in the sanctioning of the loans that have come before us.

THE EARL OF ONSLOW: I quite agree with the noble Lords that there is no reason for accusing the Finance Committee of the London County Council of any undue or unnecessary delay. The effect of this Amendment will be to im-

Duke of Devonshire.

pose upon local authorities the obligation of furnishing particulars of their applications within reasonable time, and I believe there is no case in which a local body has failed to furnish the necessary particulars within six months. I do not think the Government regard this as a clause which penalises the County Council in any way.

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE: The St. Pancras Vestry applied on July 11, 1898, for a loan. The London County Council asked the Vestry to supply them with particulars, and these particulars have not yet been supplied.

***LORD WELBY:** The Vestry once wrote asking why the sanction of the County Council had not been granted, whereas the sanction had been some two or three months in their hands.

On question, "That the words 'with necessary particulars' be here inserted," resolved in the negative.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: The object of the Amendment standing in my name is to secure uniformity in the administration of the Adoptive Acts throughout the whole area of a borough. There are a number of Acts which enable local authorities to take over powers with regard to public libraries, baths, and wash-houses, the maintenance of burial grounds, and so forth. These powers have been adopted and undertaken by many local authorities throughout London; but it happens that in the amalgamation of these local authorities into borough councils it is found that one parish has adopted the Baths and Libraries Acts and that another has not. The effect of the Bill as it stands will be to set up within the area of the borough council different sub-areas dealing with these subjects and being individually rated in respect of them, instead of the rate being spread over the whole area of the new boroughs. Simplicity of government is one of the great objects to be aimed at, and I contend that, when the present authorities are merged into boroughs, the latter should assume all the responsibilities which have been taken over by the various local authorities under the Adoptive Acts. It may be said that this would be unfair to those portions of the new boroughs

which, up to now, had not adopted these Acts; but as the new boroughs will share in the advantages of these institutions it is only fair that the charge in respect of them should be spread over the whole of the area.

Amendment moved—

“In page 3, line 26, at the end to add, ‘and the council shall have and exercise the powers of any such Act over the whole area of these boroughs.’”—(*The Lord Tweedmouth.*)

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE :

“There is a provision further on in the clause which provides that, where any of the Adoptive Acts adopted before the appointed day do not extend to the whole borough, the Act may be adopted in the rest of the borough in like manner as if it were a separate borough, and the borough council were the council thereof. I think it would not be safe to extend the provisions of the Bill further in this direction. If the Amendment were carried, and one part of a borough wished to adopt the Libraries Act, the whole of the rest of the borough would be obliged to adopt the Act whether it wished to or not.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY : I desire to raise a point at this stage which is of some little consequence to a particular parish in London. If Lord Tweedmouth's Amendment were adopted no question would arise such as the one I am about to put. I refer to the case of Chelsea, which is a very peculiar parish. The parish of Chelsea includes the outlying district of Kensal Town. Chelsea has adopted the Libraries Act, but Kensal Town, being an outlying portion of that parish, must, under this Bill, be joined to some neighbouring parish. The two neighbouring parishes are Kensington and Paddington. If Kensal Town should be annexed to Kensington, then I conclude that it would be able to maintain the library under the Libraries Act which has been adopted in that parish; but if it should be annexed to Paddington, there arises a very important point. The area of Kensal Town only produces £236 by means of a 1d. rate—the total rate allowed in respect of the Libraries Act—but the expenditure incurred in Kensal Town in maintaining the library amounted last year to £1,104. Therefore a large portion of the expenses of keeping up the library in Kensal Town

will fall upon the rest of the parish of Chelsea, and the question which I, and those who are interested with me in this matter, have never been able to solve is whether Paddington will have to bear the whole of the additional sum to make up the £1,100, and, if so, under what power in the Act can the rate be levied; because Paddington, not having adopted the Libraries Act, has no power to raise any money under the Act. I cannot see that there is any power given in the Bill to enable Paddington, if it does not adopt the Libraries Act, which it is not likely to do, to provide the necessary sum. In another part of the Bill it says that adjustments are to be made in order to prevent any undue charge falling on one parish, but I think power should be given, in case Kensal Town is joined to another parish where there is not a library rate, to enable the amount necessary to make up the cost of maintenance to be raised by the parish. We are by no means certain that the Commissioners would have the necessary power to enable them to make this adjustment.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE : I believe this point is specifically raised by the Amendment standing in the name of Lord Windsor.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY : If the Amendment of Lord Windsor is adopted, of course all that I have said falls to the ground. If the noble Duke intends to accept that Amendment, the case is altered.

LORD MONKSWEEL : The noble Duke said it would be unjust to insist upon the whole of the borough adopting the Act, but there is injustice caused if that is not done. The noble Duke will observe that, under his own clause, where an Adoptive Act has been adopted, the borough council is to be the body to administer it. In the case of Kensal Town, the new Borough of Paddington, if Kensal Town is joined to Paddington, will not be obliged to contribute to the maintenance of the library, but will, nevertheless, have the power of superintending the library. The whole power of management will be placed in the hands of Paddington. I would suggest that a middle course might be adopted, and that power should be given to the Commissioners, not to rate the whole of

the borough, but to decide what additional part of the borough should be rated for the maintenance of this library. It may be that in some parts of Paddington this library will not be of much use, and the noble Duke may say that it is not right that the whole of Paddington should have to contribute; but the best way out of the difficulty will be to empower the Commissioners to carve out a district which would benefit, and which should pay the rate for the support of the library. Even if the Commissioners were to join Kensal Town to Kensington I think some difficulty would arise. I believe the limit of Kensington is a $\frac{1}{2}$ d. library rate, and they spend the whole of the sum produced by that rate in supporting their own libraries. The people of Kensington would probably regard it as as injustice if they were compelled to raise their library rate from $\frac{1}{2}$ d. to 1d. when they had sufficient library accommodation of their own.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: As regards the case of the Kensal Town Library, I am advised that it will be within the powers of the Commissioners to frame a scheme which will deal with that difficulty. I do not exactly know how the scheme will be framed, but I am afraid the difficulty is one which cannot be dealt with in any other way. I do not see what Amendment we can put into the Bill to deal with this case without inflicting injustice upon someone. Perhaps, however, it will be convenient to discuss the case further when we come to Lord Windsor's Amendment.

On Question, "That the proposed words shall be here inserted," resolved in the negative.

On Question, "That Clause 4 stand part of the Bill," agreed to.

Clause 5, agreed to.

Clause 6 :—

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: The Amendment which I desire to move to this clause is simply intended to preserve to the London County Council the same power which is now possessed in common with county councils throughout the United Kingdom of declaring roads to be main roads. Under this Bill the existing

main roads in London, which cover over 12 miles, are done away with as main roads, and handed over to the several borough councils to deal with, but I think it is conceivable that at some future time, in connection with some improvement, it may be desirable to declare some road in London to be a main road, and one to be kept up by the central authority.

Amendment moved—

"In page 4, line 27, after 'road' to insert 'existing at the passing of this Act.'—(*The Lord Tweedmouth.*)

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: This was promised, I understand, in the House of Commons, and I agree to the Amendment.

On Question, "That the proposed words shall be here inserted," agreed to.

Other Amendments made.

Clause 6, as amended, agreed to.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: The next Amendment I have upon the Paper is one which I regard as of considerable importance. It is to omit the words giving to the new councils power to promote or oppose Bills in Parliament under the Borough Funds Act, 1882, in order to insert "power to promote Bills in Parliament to make improvements of public utility wholly within their districts, and not intended to be paid for either wholly or in part out of the county fund." The power to be conferred by the clause is such as is exercised by other municipalities throughout the kingdom, but the conditions attaching to administration by the new councils will be very different to those which obtain in provincial towns, where the municipality is distinct, separate, and supreme within its own area. There will be twenty-seven administrative councils in London huddled up together, abutting on and dove-tailed into each other, and to give them this large power unrestricted will, I think, be unwise and undesirable. The powers given to municipalities under the Borough Funds Act allows expenditure from the rates in promoting and opposing Bills in the interests of the inhabitants of the district. That is a very large power indeed. The London County Council

Lord Monkswell.

succeeded only to the powers of the Metropolitan Board of Works, and they were permitted merely to promote Bills for the "execution of works." But you are giving to these new boroughs far greater power than that. You are indeed tying them down to nothing at all. I do not ask the House to take away from these new bodies the power of promoting Bills in Parliament, but I do suggest that there should be a certain limit placed upon that power. I propose that the new boroughs should have power to promote Bills in Parliament to make improvements of public utility wholly within their own districts, and not intended to be paid for either wholly or in part out of the county fund. In my opinion the power so limited would be quite sufficient for the purposes of the new municipalities. Personally, I think the London County Council has used its powers in a manner open to criticism, and expenditure has, perhaps, not always been incurred to the best advantage of the ratepayers. The experience of the County Council opens up a dismal prospect to me if we are to have 27 other bodies taking similar action with regard to every Bill which may be said in any way to affect the interests of the inhabitants of these particular boroughs. I can understand that the legal Members of your Lordships' House may be anxious to support the clause, as the provision will certainly bring further grist to the mill of the Parliamentary Bar; but in the interests of the ratepayers I propose this limitation on the powers to be conferred on the new boroughs.

Amendment moved—

"In page 5, line 22, to leave out from 'have' to end of clause, and insert 'power to promote Bills in Parliament to make improvements of public utility wholly within their districts, and not intended to be paid for either wholly or in part out of the county fund.'"—(*The Lord Tweedmouth.*)

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: I do not believe the Amendment of the noble Lord, as it stands, will meet even that which he is willing to concede to the new boroughs. The words "power to promote Bills in Parliament to make improvements of public utility wholly within their districts" would exclude action in cases where two or three authorities might wish to join together to promote or oppose a Bill. The question of limitation upon the

power given by this clause has been very carefully and fully considered in the House of Commons, and I do not think there can be any doubt that it is desirable that as far as possible the analogy of the Municipal Corporations Act should be followed, and that appears to have been the strong opinion of the House of Commons. The question was raised by Mr. Stuart, and the provision, as it stands, was maintained by a large majority, and was again maintained on Report. The Borough Funds Act gives considerable protection to the ratepayers against the misuse of the power, and the matter has been discussed in the House of Commons by Members well acquainted with the working of the Act and the dangers likely to arise. I do not think it would be judicious for your Lordships to give to the constituencies a protection which the House of Commons on two occasions deliberately declared to be unnecessary. I think on the whole it is desirable to maintain the clause as it stands. At any rate, I do not think the noble Lord's Amendment carries out what he desires.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: The decision in the House of Commons was on the question of withholding this power, which I only propose to confine within reasonable limits. I am afraid I must put the House to the trouble of a Division on this proposal—on the principle of it. I do not myself attach great importance to the particular words I have proposed; it is the principle that this power should be given to the new boroughs only in a limited form.

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: May I point out to my noble friend that he is really taking away a restriction upon these bodies. Under Clause 10 the powers given are the same as those under the Borough Funds Act. My noble friend strikes out those words, and then gives a direct power to promote Bills where the object is undoubtedly within their districts. He takes away the restriction of the vote of the ratepayers, and the consent of the Local Government Board, and the consequence is that he will be giving to these bodies, if this Amendment is carried, far greater powers than municipal bodies now have. Then comes his limitation, which would very often act in a very inconvenient way. In the matter of electric lighting, for instance, you may

want to put one portion of your Bill outside your area ; but, under this Amendment, directly you go outside you will have no power. So that the restriction proposed by my noble friend is bad, and I think the extension is equally bad also.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH : I do not think my noble friend opposite has correctly stated the effect of the Amendment. With regard to the first point, as to the vote of the ratepayers, I do not think that is very material so far as London is concerned. Meetings of ratepayers in the London boroughs are not so easily had as in the case of the country

municipalities. But this I would say, in order to assist the progress of business. If the noble Duke will say that he will consider, at any rate on Report, an Amendment in the direction of the principle that I wish to insist upon, then I will not put your Lordships to the trouble of a Division. If I take a Division, it will be on the principle, and not on the exact words to be found in this Amendment.

On Question, whether the words proposed to be left out shall stand part of clause, their Lordships divided : Contents, 59 ; Not-contents, 21.

CONTENTS.

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Devonshire, D. (*L. President.*)
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Northumberland, D.
Portland, D.
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Ribblesdale, L. [*Teller.*]
Tweedmouth, L.
Wandsworth, L.
Welby, L.

Clause 6, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 7, amended, and agreed to.

House resumed, and to be again in Committee To-morrow ; the Committee to have precedence of other Notices and Orders of the Day.

Lord James of Hereford.

MANCHESTER CANONRIES BILL [Lords.]

House in Committee (according to Order) : Bill reported without Amendment : Standing Committee negatived ; and Bill to be read the third time on Thursday next.

House adjourned at Eight of the clock till To-morrow, half-past Ten of the clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 26th June 1899.

PRIVATE BILLS. [Lords.]

Standing Orders not previously inquired into complied with.

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz. :—

ABERDEEN JOINT PASSENGER STATION BILL. [Lords.]

CALEDONIAN RAILWAY (GENERAL POWERS) BILL. [Lords.]

MANCHESTER CORPORATION TRAMWAYS BILL. [Lords.]

SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE TRAMWAYS BILL. [Lords.]

WOLVERHAMPTON TRAMWAYS BILL. [Lords.]

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS. [Lords.]

Standing Orders applicable thereto complied with.

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz. :—

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDER No. 9 BILL. [Lords.]

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time to-morrow.

PRIVATE BILLS. [Lords.]

No Standing Orders not previously inquired into applicable.

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First

Reading thereof, no Standing Orders not previously inquired into are applicable, viz. :—

OWENS COLLEGE MANCHESTER BILL. [Lords.]

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

COLONIAL AND FOREIGN BANKS GUARANTEE FUND BILL. [Lords.]

Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

AIRDRIE AND COATBRIDGE WATER BILL. [Lords.]

BRISTOL GAS BILL [Lords.]

As amended, considered ; to be read the third time.

DUNDEE GAS, STREET IMPROVEMENTS, AND TRAMWAYS BILL. [Lords.]

As amended, considered ; an Amendment made ; Bill to be read the third time.

GAINSBOROUGH URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL (GAS) BILL. [Lords.]

As amended, considered ; to be read the third time.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (GENERAL POWERS) (RE-COMMITTED) BILL.

As amended, considered :

Ordered, that Standing Orders 223 and 243 be suspended, and that the Bill be now read the third time.—(*Dr. Farquharson.*)

Bill read the third time accordingly, and passed. [New title.]

WICK AND PULTENEY HARBOURS BILL. [Lords.]

As amended, considered ; to be read the third time.

BUENOS AYRES AND PACIFIC RAILWAY COMPANY BILL. [Lords.]

TRANSVAAL MORTGAGE, LOAN, AND FINANCE COMPANY BILL. [Lords.]

YORKE ESTATE BILL. [Lords.]

Read a second time, and committed.

LEEDS CORPORATION BILL.

Ordered, That the Order of the House of the 14th April, 1899, that in the

case of Bills reported from the Committee on Police and Sanitary Regulations, three days shall intervene between the date when the Report of the Committee is circulated with the Votes and the consideration of the Bill, be suspended in the case of the Leeds Corporation Bill.

Ordered, That Standing Orders 84, 214, 215, and 239 be suspended, and that the Bill be now taken into consideration provided amended prints shall have been previously deposited. — (*Dr. Farquharson.*)

Bill, as amended, considered accordingly.

Ordered, That Standing Orders 223 and 243 be suspended, and that the Bill be now read the third time. — (*Dr. Farquharson.*)

Bill read the third time accordingly, and passed.

MENSTONE WATER BILL.

Ordered, That in the case of the Menstone Water Bill, Standing Orders 84, 214, 215, and 239 be suspended, and that the Bill be now taken into consideration provided amended prints shall have been previously deposited. — (*Dr. Farquharson.*)

Bill, as amended, considered accordingly.

Ordered, That Standing Orders 223 and 243 be suspended, and that the Bill be now read the third time. — (*Dr. Farquharson.*)

Bill read the third time accordingly, and passed.

LONDON UNITED TRAMWAYS BILL.

Ordered, That, in the case of the London United Tramways Bill, Standing Orders 84, 214, 215, and 239 be suspended, and that the Bill be now taken into consideration provided amended prints shall have been previously deposited. — (*Dr. Farquharson.*)

Bill, as amended, considered accordingly.

Ordered, That Standing Orders 223 and 243 be suspended, and that the Bill be now read the third time. — (*Dr. Farquharson.*)

Bill read the third time accordingly, and passed.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP M).

Ordered, That the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Committee on the Kilpatrick Dock Bill, in the Session of 1897, and the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Committee on the Renfrew Burgh and Harbour Extension Bill, in the Session of 1898, be referred to the Committee on the Renfrew Burgh and Harbour Extension Bill [Lords] and the Clyde Navigation Bill [Lords] of the present Session. — (*Dr. Farquharson.*)

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION (LIVERPOOL) BILL. [Lords.]

Read the third time and passed, without Amendment.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 4) BILL.

Read the third time, and passed.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 12) BILL.

As amended, considered; read the third time, and passed.

MILLWALL DOCK BILL.

Reported with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table.

ST. NEOT'S WATER BILL. [Lords.]

Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

GLASGOW CORPORATION (TRAMWAYS, &c.). [Lords.]

GREENOCK AND PORT GLASGOW TRAMWAYS. [Lords.]

Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—

Edinburgh Corporation Bill, Wetherby District Water Bill, South-Eastern Railway Bill, with Amendments.

Amendments to Aberdeen Corporation Bill [Lords], without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill intituled, "An Act to confer further powers on the North Staffordshire Railway Company." [North Staffordshire Railway Bill [Lords.]]

And also a Bill intituled, "An Act to confer further powers upon the Great

Eastern Railway Company; to authorise them to execute further works; to acquire additional lands and to raise further money; and for other purposes." [Great Eastern Railway (General Powers) Bill [Lords.]]

NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE RAILWAY BILL. [Lords.]

GREAT EASTERN RAILWAY (GENERAL POWERS) BILL. [Lords.]

Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 14) BILL.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee on the Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 14) Bill to divide the Bill into two Bills, one comprising the Orders relating to Isle of Thanet (Rural), Ramsgate, and Reading, the other comprising the Order relating to Rhyl, and to report them separately to the House—*(Mr. T. W. Russell.)*

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon): Does the hon. Member propose to move the second part of the arrangement with regard to the *locus standi*?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: I propose to put the notice on the Paper and move the motion to-morrow.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 14) BILL.

Reported.

Divided into two Bills:

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 14) BILL

AND

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 15) BILL.

Pursuant to Instruction [26th June].

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 14) BILL.

Comprising the Orders relating to Isle of Thanet (Rural), Ramsgate, and Reading; reported, with Amendments [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Title amended; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Bill, as amended, to be considered To-morrow.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 15) BILL.

Comprising the Order relating to Rhyl; reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table; Bill re-committed.

PETITIONS.

PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Pollockshaws, in favour: to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Melsenby; —York (three); —Danby; —Preston-under-Scaur; —Kirby Moorside; —Old Malton; —Horncliffe; —Rosedale; —Saltburn; —Esk Valley (two); —Northallerton; —Carperby; —New Marske; —Loftus-in-Cleveland; —Carlin How; —Torrington; —Hovingtham; —Swinton; —Thornton-le-Clay; —Bulmer; —Barton-le-Street; —Welburn; —Coneythorpe; —Flaxton; —Sheriff Hutton; —Snainton; —Runswick; —Seamer; —East Ayton; —Whitby (six); —Lythe; —Malton; —Thornton-le-Dale; —Scarborough (eight); —Helperby; —Rillington; —Castleton; —Nawton; —Pickering; —Scaiby; —Appleton Wiske; —Eppleby; —Richmond (Yorkshire); —Liverpool; —Thornaby-on-Tees; —Newfield; —Evenwood; —Willington; —Barningham; —Mickleton; —Mickleby; —Cayton; —Slingsby; —Staithes; —North Skelton; —Redcar; —South Bank; —Glaisdale; —Cloughton; —Hinderwell; —Stokesley; —and Helmsley (two); to lie upon the Table.

VIVISECTION.

Petition from London, for prohibition; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

PUBLIC RECORDS.

Copy presented of Sixtieth Annual Report of the Deputy Keeper [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

MILITARY WORKS BILL, 1899.

Copy presented of Schedules showing the Expenditure on Services to be under-

taken under the Military Works Bill of 1899, and the complete War Office Scheme [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ARMY RIFLE RANGES.

Return presented relative thereto [Address 19th June; *Mr. Frederick Wilson*]; to lie upon the Table.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACTS, 1894 AND 1896.

Copy presented of Order, dated 20th June, 1899, No. 5,952, revoking Order No. 5,912, which prohibited the conveyance of animals by the steamship "*J. W. Taylor*" [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANKS.

Accounts presented of all Deposits received and paid during the year ended 31st December, 1898, and of the Sums received and paid by the National Debt Commissioners on account of the Fund for the Post Office Savings Banks in the same year [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 243.]

LAND REGISTRY.

Account presented of Receipts and Payments in respect of the Land Registry for the year ended 31st March, 1899 [by Act]—to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 244.]

HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE AND COURT OF APPEAL, &c.

Copy presented of Account showing the Receipts and Expenditure in respect of the High Court of Justice and the Court of Appeal during the year ended 31st March, 1899 [by Act]—to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 245.]

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1887.

Copy presented of Treasury Minute, dated 16th June, 1899, granting a retired allowance, under the Act, to *Mr. John Dalzell*, officer of excise, Belfast Collection, Inland Revenue [by Act]—to lie upon the Table.

Paper laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House—

INQUIRY INTO CHARITIES (COUNTY OF CARNARVON).

Further Return relative thereto [ordered 10th February, 1898—*Mr. Grant Lawson*]; to be printed. [No. 246.]

QUESTIONS.

NAVAL AND MILITARY OFFICERS AT WEI-HAI-WEI.

SIR J. COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether any force of marine artillery or infantry has been employed on shore at Wei-hai-wei, and, if so, for what purpose and between what dates.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (*Mr. Goschen*, St. George's, Hanover Square): No marine artillery have, to my knowledge, been employed at Wei-hai-wei. Some marine light infantry have been stationed at Wei-hai-wei for guard duties on the mainland and some on the island of *Leu Kung* for the same purpose—from an early date in the occupation till now.

SIR J. COLOMB: Is the force still there?

MR. GOSCHEN: Yes; there are still marines there.

SIR J. COLOMB: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War what is the rank of the officer now in command at Wei-hai-wei, and to what arm of the Service does he belong.

**THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR* (*Mr. Wyndham*, Dover): The senior military officer at Wei-hai-wei is Lieutenant-Colonel *Bower*, of the Indian Staff Corps, but a naval officer, Commander *Gaunt*, is acting as Commissioner. The arrangement is, however, provisional.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (*Lynn Regis*): Is the naval officer in command?

**MR. WYNDHAM*: Yes, Sir, he may be said to be senior as regards the administration of the station as a whole.

COMMISSIONS FROM THE RANKS.

MR. PIRIE (*Aberdeen, N.*): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War would he state the number of commissions granted from the ranks, excluding those given to quartermasters and riding masters, during the following periods: 1886-90, both inclusive; 1891-5, both inclusive; and during each of the years 1896, 1897, and 1898; also the percentage which such commissions bear to the total number granted in each

of those periods, excluding those to quarter and riding masters.

*MR. WYNDHAM: If the hon. and gallant Member will move for a Return it will be granted.

ARMY RECRUITS.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he can state if recruits specially enlisted below the standard as to age and measurements, who are examined periodically by the Army medical authorities, are after the short period of three months' service, if favourably reported upon, retained in the service as effective soldiers, although they have not attained the standard required for enlistment under ordinary circumstances.

*MR. WYNDHAM: Yes, Sir.

RUSSIAN RAILWAY TO PEKIN.

SIR ELLIS ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs by what route the Russians proposed to make the railway to Pekin for which they recently presented a demand to the Chinese Government.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): We are not aware that any route was specified in the Russian demand for a railway to the south-west, with respect to which we have no definite information.

NEWFOUNDLAND FISHERIES.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs a question of which I have given him private notice—namely, whether Her Majesty's Government have received any intelligence as to a dispute stated to have arisen between Commander Gifford and the French naval commander on the coast of Newfoundland with reference to the taking of bait by French vessels on the French shore, or with reference to the supply of bait to such vessels, and whether he can make any statement on the subject.

*MR. BRODRICK: Some differences, I believe, have occurred on the treaty shore with regard to the question of bait, but as my hon. friend gave me private notice of his question only three minutes ago I

think I must ask him to put a question down for to-morrow.

PATENT OFFICE REVENUE.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade what has been the total net surplus revenue of the Patent Office in the last ten years over and above the £95,000 expended on the new buildings; how much of that surplus has accrued since the reduction of the fees on the renewal of patents; and whether it is in contemplation to apply some portion of the surplus to the cost of examining applications for novelty.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. LONG, Liverpool, West Derby)—(for Mr. RITCHIE): The total net surplus revenue of the Patent Office during the ten years ended in December, 1898, appears from the Annual Reports of the Comptroller-General to have amounted to £1,002,232. The reduction of fees on the renewal of patents commenced in October, 1892. It is impossible to say how much of the surplus revenue accrued between that date and December, 1892. The amount, however, which accrued during the six years following the latter date appears from the Annual Reports of the Comptroller-General to have been £596,057. During the next two years the net surplus revenue will probably be considerably diminished, owing to the fact that the reconstruction of the Patent Office buildings is now proceeding rapidly, and will absorb a larger amount of the revenue than it has done in previous years. The question whether any further portion of the surplus revenue of the office should be applied for the benefit of inventors, and, if so, in what way it would be most advantageously employed, is a very difficult one. Many suggestions have been made on the subject, some of which are now under consideration.

BOARD OF TRADE REGULATIONS IN SCOTTISH PORTS.

MR. PIRIE: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he is aware that the vessel "Grove Hill," of Hull, was lately detained at Leith for a week, in order that the Plimsoll mark might be painted on her side; that the local Board of Trade surveyor could have himself done the work immediately; that the

delay arose from his having to send his report up to London for ratification; and that great inconvenience and expense is entailed generally on vessels in Scottish ports from such centralisation; whether, in such simple cases, the local authorities could be authorised to act on their own responsibility, or would he consider the expediency of appointing a central Scottish authority with the necessary powers, so that the shipping and commercial interests of Scotland may be placed on an equality with those of England in this and other matters relating to the Board of Trade; and whether the Board will make good the loss sustained by both the owners of the vessels and the shippers concerned in the above case.

MR. LONG (for Mr. RITCHIE): Inquiry has been made in the case to which the hon. Member refers, and I am informed that any delay that may have arisen was because the first application for a freeboard stated that the "Grove Hill" was a classed ship, whereas, it appears, she was not, and because docking and repairs were necessary. The vessel was not placed in dock for examination until the 12th instant, and, as the agent was informed of the freeboard on the 14th, there does not appear to be any valid ground for complaint. There are principal officers of the Board of Trade at Leith and Glasgow fully empowered to deal with simple cases, but any change in the arrangement by which freeboards are only assigned by the central authority in London is to be deprecated. The answer to the final paragraph of the question is in the negative.

TITHE RENT-CHARGE (RATES) BILL.

MR. BILLSON (Halifax): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture if he can state the number of the clergy who will benefit by the provisions of the proposed Tithe Rent-charge (Rates) Bill.

MR. LONG: Between ten and eleven thousand.

SIR H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman if he can supply the House with a statement, or if he proposes to explain in his speech on the Second Reading, how he arrives at the figures £87,000.

MR. LONG: I do not propose to make a statement in moving the Second Read-

ing, but I have no doubt that in the course of the Debate I shall be able to justify the figure of £87,000. If necessary, I will consider whether it is possible to give it before.

SIR H. H. FOWLER: It would be a convenience if we had it before the Debate began.

MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether, under Sub-section (2) of Clause 2 of the Tithe Rent-charge (Rates) Bill, the clergy of the City of London and other parts of the metropolis, and elsewhere, whose receipts from payments in lieu of tithes have suffered no abatement as a result of agricultural depression, will be relieved from the payment of half their rates.

MR. LONG: The Bill is not based upon the fact that the value of tithe rent-charge has been diminished by reason of agricultural depression, but upon the excessive burdens which clerical owners are called upon to bear as compared with other classes of ratepayers. It therefore applies to all payments in lieu of tithes, whether such payments vary with the price of agricultural produce or not; but the Bill has, of course, no application where the payments are not rateable, as is very frequently, if not usually, the case in the instances to which the hon. Member more especially refers.

BOARDING OUT PAUPER CHILDREN.

MR. FLOWER (Bradford, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he can state how many boards of guardians have adopted the system of boarding-out Poor Law children since the year 1897; and if he will state how many have abandoned the system.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, Tyrone, S.): Four boards of guardians have since 1897 adopted the system of boarding-out children beyond the limits of the union, and fifteen boards of guardians have boarded or propose to board children within the limits of the union under the supervision of a boarding-out committee. The Local Government Board have no precise information as to the abandonment of the system of boarding-out by boards of guardians. The last returns, however,

show that five boards of guardians, who in 1897 boarded out children beyond the union, had at the date of the return no children so boarded out.

MARY PADWICK.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he is aware that Mary Padwick, the wife of an English soldier who died during service in India in 1890, was transferred by the Prestwich Guardians, Manchester, to the Listowel (County Kerry) Union, of which she is now an inmate, and a cost on the rate-payers: whether he is aware that the Prestwich Guardians requested the Listowel Guardians to sign an order for the removal of Mary Padwick from Prestwich without the customary magistrate's order; and whether instructions will be given directing the Prestwich Board of Guardians, at their expense, to remove Mary Padwick from the Listowel Union.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The facts appear to be as stated in the question. The Guardians of the Listowel Union declined to accept Mary Padwick without a magistrate's order, and an order was thereupon obtained and the woman was removed under it. I am not aware of any ground for the removal of the pauper from the Listowel Union, and the Local Government Board would have no authority to give any instructions in the matter.

MR. FLAVIN: Cannot the right hon. Gentleman say why the same restrictions are not imposed in England as in Scotland?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order!

METROPOLITAN POLICE.

CAPTAIN NORTON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that men with less than two years' service are now leaving the Metropolitan Police Force in larger numbers than at any previous period; and also that one of the chief causes of their action is the difficulty they experience in finding suitable house accommodation in the inner or town districts, unless at the sacrifice of such a proportion of their pay as leaves them scarcely a living wage, and places them at a disadvantage as compared with the better class workers from the ranks of

which they are mainly recruited; and whether he will cause inquiry to be made into all the circumstances of the case.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir M. WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): I am not aware that the facts are as stated in the first paragraph, or that the chief cause of removals from the Metropolitan Police Force is that suggested in the second paragraph. As about 85 per cent. of the men with less than two years' service are single, and are provided with lodgings in section houses, they are least affected by a difficulty which not only affects the police, but equally also all other classes of the community whose occupations compel them to live within the congested districts of inner London.

DUKE STREET PRISON, GLASGOW—HOSPITAL ACCOMMODATION—CASE OF MARY CARROLL.

MR. J. P. SMITH (Lanark, Partick): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate what is the average daily population of Duke Street Prison, Glasgow; whether he is aware that there are no hospital wards other than association cells used as such; whether he is aware that the hon. Member for Partick on a recent casual visit to the prison found a sick untried female prisoner being nursed by two convicted prisoners; and, whether the association of prisoners, without the observation of an officer, is the only means of attending to sick prisoners within the prison.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): The average daily population of Duke Street Prison is 489, of whom nearly three-fourths are females. It contains two hospital wards for females and one for males. The sick untried prisoner whom the hon. Member found, had been on previous occasions convicted 13 times. She was suffering from fits, and was associated by order of the medical officer with two other prisoners who were carefully selected by the matron who has had much experience. Prisoners thus associated are regularly visited by the prison officials, and receive all requisite care from the medical officer and nurse warders.

MR. J. P. SMITH: Are the hospital wards anything else except association cells?

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I believe that to be the case.

MR. J. P. SMITH: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he is aware that at the Duke Street Prison, on 14th October last, a prisoner, Mary Carroll, under treatment for a gangrened foot, was left alone in an ordinary cell; that, being taken seriously ill in the night, the nurse warder was summoned, and Mary Carroll was removed to an association cell already occupied by a sick prisoner under the charge of two other prisoners; that she was left in charge of these two prisoners, who about an hour afterwards rang the bell and reported that she had a bad turn, and, that on the arrival of the nurse warder, she was found to be dead; what was the report of the doctor upon the case; what were the qualifications of the nurse warder to judge as to the condition of the patient; whether any steps have since been taken to ensure that prisoners seized with serious illness shall receive attention; and, whether he will provide that in so large a prison there shall be a proper hospital where all the sick can be placed, and a properly trained nurse in constant attendance.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: The case of Mary Carroll is substantially as stated by the hon. Member. The report of the doctor was to the effect that she was suffering from gangrene of the toes of her right foot. Although she regarded it herself as of no consequence, he ordered her to be put to bed and placed under treatment. On the morning of the 14th October she complained of breathlessness, she was removed to the hospital ward and attended to by the sick nurse, till she felt better. An hour afterwards she had a sudden attack and died. The symptoms and manner of death point to a clot of blood as the immediate cause. The nurse warder had acted for more than 2½ years in the hospital wards of an English asylum, she had had 15 months' training in a Scottish asylum, and is a regularly certificated nurse. The medical officer is quite satisfied with her. When this prison was rebuilt the hospital accommodation was arranged in consultation with the medical officer. The chief medical adviser does not consider that a separate hospital building is a necessity at Duke Street Prison, and the Prison Commissioners are not at present prepared to recommend that there should be one.

VACCINATION IN SCOTLAND.

SIR CHARLES CAMERON (Glasgow, Bridgeton): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate how many persons were sent to prison in Scotland for refusing to have children vaccinated during the first six months of 1898 and 1899 respectively; whether any alteration has been made in the instructions of the Scottish Local Government Board as to vaccination prosecutions; and whether any steps, and, if so, what steps, have been taken for the gratuitous distribution in Scotland as in England of glycerinated calf lymph.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I am informed by the Prison Commissioners for Scotland that there were eleven such cases in the first six months of 1898 and seven in the same period in 1899. I have ascertained from the Local Government Board that they have made no alteration in their instructions. Arrangements have been made, with the sanction of the Treasury, whereby parochial vaccinators shall obtain gratuitous supplies of sterilised calf lymph, as in England.

SIR CHARLES CAMERON: Has it not come into operation yet?

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: No.

EVENING CONTINUATION SCHOOLS IN SCOTLAND.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether his attention has been called to a paragraph on page 30 of the Education Report for the Northern Division of Scotland for 1898, to the effect that the development of the evening continuation school system is retarded through the managers of schools in certain districts being unwilling to place new burdens on the rates; and in view of the fact that in most of thecrofting counties the majority of the ratepayers have no voice in the election of school managers, will he state what steps he proposes to take so that the growth of evening continuation schools may not be impeded.

MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: The terms of the grants offered by the Evening Continuation School Code are very liberal, but it must rest with the local authorities to say whether they are prepared to make themselves responsible for such local expenditure as may be necessary to earn those grants. I am not pre-

pared to admit the assumption in the second paragraph of the question so far as it concerns those rated for school expenses; but in any case the conditions of Evening School Grants must be considered apart from the question of the School Board franchise.

THE CROFTERS ACT, 1886.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the Secretary for Scotland has received a copy of the resolution carried at the last meeting of the Ross and Cromarty County Council in favour of the extension of the Crofters Act, 1886, to leaseholders under £30; and, will he state what steps it is proposed to take in the matter.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: The Secretary for Scotland has received the resolution referred to, but sees no sufficient reason for taking any steps in regard to it.

SCOTLAND—SCHOOL CLOAK-ROOMS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the Secretary for Scotland is aware that the Education (Scotland, Northern Division) Report for 1898, page 8, shows that in some districts suitable space is not provided in schools for the children's cloaks and caps, that they are massed together, and frequently put on damp after school hours; and, will he state whether it is proposed to take any action in the matter.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: Where the cloak-room accommodation is insufficient the Department invariably urges its supply, and exerts its authority to obtain such provision. Their Lordships believe that of late years such accommodation has in general been greatly improved.

MR. WEIR: Did not the last report of the inspector state that at Orkney and Shetland there was still insufficient accommodation, and will steps be taken to see that it is provided?

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I have stated the general policy of the Department, and I have no doubt it will be pursued.

WESTER ROSS SCHOOLS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether, in view of the statement contained in the last paragraph of

page 6 of the Education Report for the Northern Division of Scotland for 1898, it is proposed to take any steps for the suitable inspection of schools in Wester Ross without encroaching on the annual leave of absence of the present inspector.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: With a limited staff it is impossible to avoid occasional pressure, and the Department cannot consider that such occasional pressure necessarily justifies an increase of the staff. Their Lordships trust that the inspectors, as a rule, are able to obtain adequate leave; but should it be shown that the staff is inadequate they will be prepared to make representations in the proper quarter.

ORPHAN HOMES OF SCOTLAND.

SIR CHARLES CAMERON: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate, in view of his statement on the 16th instant that the question of the education of the 900 children at the Orphan Homes of Scotland was under the consideration of the Education Department, whether the result of their deliberations has yet been communicated to Mr. Quarrier; and if not, how soon such communication will be made.

MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: The legal aspects of the question referred to have been under consideration. The matter must also be carefully considered by the Department from an administrative point of view. I can only add that the Department will communicate as early as possible with the parties interested.

SCOTTISH CASTLES AND PALACES—CROWN RENTS.

MR. PIRIE: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether feu and teind duties are collected from various properties in Scotland for the repair and up-keep of the Castles of Edinburgh, Linlithgow, Blackness, and Stirling; and would he state where those properties are situated, the various amounts so collected for each of the places named, and what becomes of the money.

MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I am informed by the Office of Woods and Forests that the Crown collects certain feu, blench, and teind duties formerly paid to the Governors of Edinburgh and Stirling Castles, and to the office of Keeper of the Palace of Linlithgow and Castle of Blackness. These duties are paid with other Crown rents into the Ex-

chequer. The Linlithgow Palace buildings are under the supervision of the Office of Works, and Edinburgh, Stirling, and Blackness Castles, though remaining the property of the Crown, are in the occupation of the War Office. It would be extremely difficult to give the detailed particulars of the various lands and duties.

SCOTLAND AND THE TITHE RENT-CHARGE (RATES) BILL

MR. BIRRELL (Fife, W.): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether it is the intention of the Government, in the event of the Tithe Rent-charge (Rates) Bill becoming law this session, to provide for an equivalent grant to Scotland out of the Estate Duty Grant; if so, what opportunities will be afforded for the discussion of the purposes to which such equivalent grant shall be applied.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: It is not proposed to make any increase of the Estate Duty Grant in the case of England, and there is, therefore, no ground for the increase of the grant in the case of Scotland. The amount required for the purposes of the Bill will be paid out of the English Grant, and the Scottish Grant will not be in any way affected.

BELFAST POST OFFICE STAFF.

MR. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster-General, whether he is aware that, as the result of the last revision of the telegraph department of the Belfast Post Office, two members of the staff, who held the appointment of provincial clerk-in-charge, vacated this position on promotion, and that a third member of the telegraph staff, on being appointed to a postmastership, also forfeited the position of provincial clerk-in-charge; whether, as the result of these promotions, a notice was posted in each of the telegraph and postal departments inviting applications from the members of these departments for the vacancies thus created; what was the date of such notice, and how many applications were received; and if, as has been stated, no vacancies exist for provincial clerks-in-charge on the Belfast staff, can he state the date upon which these vacancies were filled, and whether any notice to this effect has been posted for the information of the staff generally in the Belfast office, or has any communica-

tion yet been made to those upon whom these vacancies have been conferred; and, if so, will he give the date of such communications; and if he has any objection to lay upon the Table of the House the Report furnished by the postmaster of Belfast to the Secretary, Dublin, on a recent date on the subject of these vacancies.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HANBURY, Preston): There is no fixed number of provincial clerks-in-charge. Three officers at Belfast who were on the list of clerks in charge have been promoted since November last, and their names have, therefore, been removed from the list; but there is no obligation upon the Post Office to add further names to the list either from the Belfast or any other office. Applications were invited on the 1st February and twenty names were sent in from Belfast, but no names have yet been added to the list. If the services of any candidate should be required he will, of course, be informed. The Report referred to by the hon. Member cannot be laid upon the Table of the House.

THE BREHON LAWS.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury when volumes 5 and 6 of the Brehon Laws, promised in 1893, will be published.

MR. HANBURY: It is hoped that both volumes will be published together in the autumn or winter of next year.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON SAVINGS BANKS.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, having regard to the probable advisability of procuring returns, reports, and other documents as preparatory to the work of a Select Committee on the subject, he will move for the immediate appointment of the promised Select Committee on Savings Banks; and whether, in moving for the Committee, he will either accept the terms of reference now standing on the Order Paper in the name of the Member for East Northamptonshire, or frame a reference at least as wide in its scope. In putting this question, may I explain to the right hon. Gentleman I do not contemplate the Select Committee

being appointed to hear evidence this session.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EX-CHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS - BEACH, Bristol, W.): I do not think that the appointment of a Committee is a necessary preliminary to procuring such information as the hon. Member refers to. If he will communicate to me any suggestions he may desire to make as to the nature of the information, I shall be very happy to consider them. As to the appointment of a Committee, I can only refer him to the reply which I gave to the hon. Member for Dundee on the 8th June.

SUPERANNUATION — RE-EMPLOYMENT OF RETIRED CIVIL SERVANTS.

MR. COLLERY (Sligo, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in view of the fact that under the Superannuation Acts the Government have power to call upon superannuated officials to serve again when in a competent state of health, such officials have a right to claim re-employment when under 60 years of age and restored to good health.

SIR M. HICKS-BEACH: There is no such right. Heads of departments are glad, where possible, to re-employ an efficient officer, but it may often be impossible to do so with justice to the claims of those who have remained in the service; and it would very seldom happen that a Civil servant retired on the ground of permanent incapacity from ill-health would be fit for re-employment.

RENT-CHARGE IN IRELAND—METGE v. JUSTICES OF MEATH.

MR. WILLIAM MOORE (Antrim, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether the recent decision of Her Majesty's Court of Appeal in Ireland, in the case of *Metge v. Justices of Meath*, applies to prevent a variation of rents in the nature of rent-charges fixed under the Statute 3 and 4 Will. IV., cap. 57, sec. 142.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.): Assuming Chapter 57 of the Act mentioned to be a misprint for Chapter 37, the answer to this question is in the affirmative.

RINNEEN AND LOHAR FISHERIES.

MR. FLAVIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that great inconvenience is caused to fishermen and considerable injury done to fishing boats at Rinneen and Lohar, near Waterville, County Kerry, owing to the want of proper facilities for landing boats and fish; and whether representations will be made to the Congested Districts Board with a view to have inquiries made as to the great necessity that exists for the building of a small boat slip or pier at Rinneen for the convenience of the fishermen of the surrounding districts.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. G. W. BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): The coast is very exposed in this locality, and I have no reason to doubt the accuracy of the statements in the first paragraph. The improvement of the landing place at Rinneen has been several times considered by the Congested Districts Board, but it appears that any permanently effective work would be very costly and could not be carried out without an expenditure of some thousands of pounds.

LISTOWEL SUB-COMMISSION.

MR. FLAVIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that great inconvenience has been caused to a large number of tenants in the northern portion of the County of Kerry by the fact that the Sub-Commission have not sat at Listowel for two years to hear fair rent cases, and that tenants in the Listowel district, whose applications to fix fair rents were made nearly three years ago, are still unheard; what is the number of tenants' applications now awaiting trial before the Sub-Commission at Listowel; and whether some steps will be taken to remedy the congested condition of fair rent applications in the Listowel district.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: A list containing a large number of cases from the locality of Listowel, as well as from other districts in the County Kerry, was commenced at Killarney early last month, and is now in course of disposal. That list contains all cases from the districts listed in which applications to fix fair rents were lodged in the Land Commission prior to the 1st of February, 1898. There are 90 cases from that portion

of the Listowel Union situate in County Kerry, and 22 from that portion in County Limerick, still unlisted.

MR. FLAVIN: The Appeal Commission sits only at Killarney, but my question has reference to the Sub-Commission, which sits at Listowel. I ask as to that.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: I have given the answer supplied by the Land Commission.

MR. FLAVIN: I shall put down further questions.

QUEEN'S COLLEGES (IRELAND) PROFESSORSHIPS.

MR. EDWARD M'HUGH (Armagh, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he can inform the House what percentage of Roman Catholics to other denominations have held chairs in the three Queen's Colleges since 1858; the proportion of Roman Catholics to other denominations who have held professorships in each of the three Queen's Colleges; and the percentage of Roman Catholics who have held the Chair of Mental and Moral Philosophy in each of the colleges from 1858 to the present time.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: The number of persons who have held chairs since 1858, in each of the Queen's Colleges at Belfast, Cork, and Galway has been 49, 45, and 42, of whom 3, 15, and 10 respectively were Roman Catholics. In only one of the colleges, that at Galway, has the Chair of Mental and Moral Science been held by a Roman Catholic. Two persons only have held that chair at Galway.

IRISH SALMON FISHERIES.

MR. SETON-KARR (St. Helens): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland when the Viceregal Commission to inquire into the salmon fisheries of Ireland is likely to be appointed; and whether he can give any assurance that the evidence taken by and the Report of that Commission will be published in full for the information of this House.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: The Lord Lieutenant hopes shortly to be in a position to make known the names of the Commissioners appointed to conduct this

inquiry. The usual course will be followed as to the publication in full of the evidence to be taken and of the Report of the Commission.

ARMAGH WORKHOUSE ADMINISTRATION.

MR. EDWARD M'HUGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the proceedings at the Local Government Board inquiry held in Armagh Workhouse on the 31st ult., at which evidence disclosed that a pauper inmate, named Catherine McKenna, who was admitted on the 23rd ult., was immediately thereafter, owing to ill-health, removed to the infirmary, and that the priest was sent for and came the same night; for what reason a doctor was not then sent for; whether he is aware that this woman was kept lying on a straw bed on the floor; that there was no bedstead nor any fireplace in the ward; and that there was only one nurse in the ward; and whether an inquiry will be made with the view of having a sufficient number of qualified nurses here, and proper fittings and appliances for the accommodation of the destitute paupers coming to Armagh Workhouse.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: The facts appear to be generally as stated in the first paragraph. The woman was admitted to the workhouse on the 23rd March, and was immediately sent to the infirmary or medical hospital. The matron, however, who was at the time acting for the master, absent on leave, did not deem it necessary to send for the medical officer to see her. On the 24th March she was ordered by the acting medical officer to be removed to the infirm wards, which are not under the doctor's care, but this order was not carried out, and the woman was removed to a ward which is called the "Auxiliary Infirm Ward," which is described by the medical inspector who held the inquiry as being quite unfit for infirm people to sleep in, in its present condition, as it is without proper ventilation, and the inmates are only provided with straw ticks placed on a raised part of the floor. The medical inspector has pointed out that from the time of Catherine McKenna's admission she did not receive the care and treatment which the gravity of her condition demanded, and for this failure to attend to her needs the matron was partly responsible. The fault in this case

was not that there is any insufficiency in the nursing staff, but that the woman was not placed in the hospital wards where she might have received due care and attention. The inspector has also stated that in his opinion the temporary medical officer was not free from blame, having regard to the directions given by him in the case.

KILKENNY GRAND JURY SECRETARY.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can say what was the amount of salary paid to the Secretary of the Grand Jury of the County of Kilkenny before the passing of the Local Government (Ireland) Act; and whether that officer is now entitled to receive from the County Council the various emoluments, such as fees on application for tenders, specifications, &c., which were then paid to him by the Grand Jury.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: The only information the Local Government Board have as to the remuneration of the Secretary to the Grand Jury of the County Kilkenny, before the passing of the Local Government Act, is that contained in the Return, No. 237, laid on the Table of the House in June of last year, in which his emoluments were stated to have been £520 with fees and allowances. Sections 22 and 24 of the Grand Jury Act of 1837, which authorised the secretary to demand from persons requiring them payment for forms of tender and proposals, and for preparing recognisances, are repealed by the Local Government Act. These sums were not paid by the Grand Jury and will not be paid by the County Council.

IRISH BILLS.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is now in a position to state when the Second Reading of the Agriculture and Industries (Ireland) Bill, the Tithe Rent-Charge (Ireland) Bill, and the Charitable Loans (Ireland) Bill will be taken.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I hope to reach the Agriculture and Industries Bill to-night. As regards the other two Bills, I can make no statement.

MR. DILLON: Have the Government any idea of proceeding with the Charitable Loans (Ireland) Bill? It is a Bill in which all classes in Ireland are intensely interested.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: We shall be very glad to see the Bill pass. I should have thought it would have met with no opposition, but, as the hon. Member is aware, that is not the fact; there is a good deal of opposition from his own side of the House.

LICENSING EXEMPTION (HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT) BILL.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government intend to proceed during this session with their Licensing Exemption (Houses of Parliament) Bill.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no statement to make with regard to this Bill at present.

TITHE RENT-CHARGE (RATES) BILL.

MR. PIRIE: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, whether, seeing that the Tithe Rent-charge (Rates) Bill could only be delivered in Scotland on Saturday, 24th instant, thus only giving one day for its consideration in that country before the date proposed by the Government for the Second Reading Debate, and that the interest taken by Scotland in the measure is very great, he could see his way to give further time for consideration of the measure by deferring the proposed date for Second Reading from the 27th instant.

SIR J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.): Before the First Lord of the Treasury answers the question on the Paper, I wish to ask whether it is not the case that in Scotland parish ministers do not pay any rates on their stipends.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: My right hon. friend is perfectly right in his statement that in Scotland parish ministers pay no rates upon the teinds. As regards the question on the Paper, this is not a Bill which applies to Scotland, nor is Scotland asked to pay any of the money which will go in relief of the rates of the clergy.

MR. STRACHEY (Somerset, S.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will grant a Return showing

the loss that will accrue to each administrative county and county borough under the Tithe Rent-charge (Rates) Bill.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: We do not, I beg to say in reply to the hon. Member, acknowledge that any loss will accrue to any administrative county under the Tithe Rent-charge (Rates) Bill.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. R. G. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.): At what date is it proposed to take the Report stage of the Food and Drugs Bill?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot give my hon. friend specific notice when the Report stage of the Sale of Food and Drugs Bill will be taken. I have endeavoured, with regard to Bills with which the Government desire to deal, to give as long notice as we can, but at this period of the session there must be some uncertainty, as we do not know how long the House will be occupied on Bills that precede particular ones. Therefore I hope the House will be tolerant if the Government cannot give as long notice as we should desire to give.

MR. DILLON: Will the First Lord of the Treasury give a week's notice of his intention to take the Irish Tithes Rent-charge Bill, because in the case of the English Bill the House had only two days' notice.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think I will be able to give two or three days' notice of that Bill. At present I do not like to promise more.

MR. DILLON: It is a very contentious Bill.

MR. WEIR: What Supply will be taken next Friday?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Irish Estimates.

THE TELEPHONE BILL.

MR. FAITHFULL BEGG (Glasgow, St. Rollox): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether it is a fact that an arrangement has been come to between the Government and the Telephone Company with regard to the Telephone Bill, and if he will state precisely what are the mutual concessions that have been made.

MR. HANBURY: I cannot state the concessions as fully as I ought in answer

to a question, but I have no doubt I shall be able to state them this evening when the motion for a reference to the Committee is brought forward.

NEW MEMBERS.

New Members sworn:—Arthur Dewar, Esq., for Burgh of Edinburgh (South Division); George McCrae, Esq., for Burgh of Edinburgh (East Division).

ALLEGED BREACH OF PARLIAMENTARY USAGE.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I desire, Mr. Speaker, with great respect, to bring under your notice what I conceive to be a breach of the custom of Parliament with reference to the canvassing, direct and indirect, by the agents of a monopolist company called the National Telephone Company. This matter has had fresh emphasis given to it by what occurred only a minute ago, when the Secretary for the Treasury gave an answer which shows that the Government are supposed to have conceded to the members of this monopoly—

MR. HANBURY: It is quite true that my hon. friend used the word "concessions," but I cannot admit that any concession whatever has been made.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I am relieved at hearing that statement, but at the same time I would remind the right hon. Gentleman that a concession would be a matter of argument. When we have the facts before us we shall know whether it is a concession or not. The question which I desire to bring under the notice of the House is a canvassing circular sent to me, and to me only in my capacity of Member of Parliament, in the hope of influencing my vote. This canvassing circular is signed by no fewer than 16 Members of the Unionist Party, who hold among them 47 directorships.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member has risen to a point of order; and I must ask him to confine himself to those matters that are relevant to the point of order.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Yes, Sir, I may be a little out of order. It is not,

perhaps, without interest that these matters are out of order to those hon. Gentlemen. The circular runs as follows :

"We, the undersigned, beg to express the hope that after the Second Reading of the Telegraph (Telephonic Communication, etc.) Bill you will support the motion to refer it to a Select Committee."

The alpha to these signatures is "John Lubbock." The right hon. Baronet is a gentleman of whom I say in his presence that he is directly and personally interested in this telephone company. Dates are of importance here. The Second Reading of this Bill came on on Tuesday, 20th June, whereas on June 15th a circular was issued out of the Stock Exchange announcing an issue of £263,000 $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. debenture stock. The right hon. Gentleman in that circular is advertised as trustee for the debenture-holders, and it is also announced that the bankers to the company are the eminent firm of Messrs. Robarts, Lubbock, and Co. It is clear, therefore, that the right hon. Gentleman was endeavouring to influence my vote when he sent that circular to me signed, "The Right Hon. Sir John Lubbock, Bart., M.P." There is something rather insidious in this circular. Although it is signed by sixteen Members, it is remarkable for those who have not signed it. There are no fewer than four right hon. Gentlemen, Members of this House, whose names are not attached to the circular.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member is not addressing himself to any point of order. The hon. Member is, apparently, about to make an attack on four gentlemen who have not signed the circular.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Far from it, Sir. The right hon. Gentlemen who have not signed the circular are to be commended for not signing it, and I consider therefore that the circular is all the more insidious. I desire to call the attention of the House to a precedent which occurred on March 16, 1888. On that occasion the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Wolverhampton drew attention to a circular which had been issued by Colonel Hughes asking hon. Members to vote for a motion in connection with grievances alleged to exist on the part of workmen employed at Woolwich

Arsenal, and the then Speaker held that such a circular was contrary to the usages of the House and tended to lower its dignity. It is within the memory of the House that in the course of a speech on Tuesday night the right hon. Gentleman the Member for London University spoke strongly in favour of the National Telephone Company as against municipal trading. Enclosed in the circular to which I have referred is a post-card asking me to say whether I am or not in favour of municipal trading. That post-card, taken in connection with the right hon. Gentleman's speech and his capacity as paid agent of this company, is clearly a breach of Parliamentary etiquette. For mercy's sake let us advocate either public interests or our own interests. If we do the latter let us say so, and not style ourselves public men. I do not suggest that this circular is a breach of privilege, but I contend that it is a gross breach of Parliamentary decorum, and in accordance with the precedent I ask you to say so. Whatever may be your ruling, Sir, I have made a statement which will be heard and read by the public.

*MR. SPEAKER: I am unable to see that the hon. Member has brought under my notice anything that amounts to a breach of any Standing Order or rule of this House. The hon. Member has brought two matters before the House. One is a circular signed by a number of Members requesting hon. Members to attend and vote against a particular motion on a Bill. That is a very common proceeding, not only on the part of private Members, but it is a daily proceeding, as we all know, on the part of Government Whips and Whips of the Opposition. The mere fact of the issuing of a circular requesting hon. Members to attend and vote is not contrary to the usage of this House. But the suggestion of the hon. Member, as I understand, is that the right hon. Baronet ought not to have sent such a whip because he has some personal pecuniary interest in the Bill. It is not for me to say whether he has a pecuniary, personal interest or not, but if he has that does not prevent him from signing a whip. The matter is in the discretion of each hon. Member whether he should send one or not, and is not contrary to any rule of this House. The right hon. Gentleman would be perfectly in order, even assuming that he had a

pecuniary interest, in addressing this House, and arguing in favour of the vote which the House should give, though he ought not to record his vote; and I certainly cannot say that it is out of order for him to send a circular asking hon. Members to vote in a particular way. If the hon. Member votes on a question in which he has a direct personal pecuniary interest, apart from his public general one, that is a matter which, as he knows, the House may inquire into. But I cannot see that in the matter the hon. Member has brought under my notice there has been any breach of privilege or of the rules and orders of this House. Then the other matter the hon. Member brought before me was the question of a circular which, I understand, was issued with a postcard inviting Members to express their opinion as to whether they adopted the same view as the right hon. Baronet with regard to municipal trading. That is not at all on all fours with the case which was cited by the hon. Member. The case cited by the hon. Member was one in which a Member had written and requested hon. Members to sign a postcard, which he enclosed, pledging themselves to vote for or against a measure which was coming before the House. The Speaker was appealed to. He did not rule that that was a breach of order or a breach of privilege. He said—and I entirely agree with him—that it was contrary to the best usages and traditions of the House. But the hon. Member is well aware that there is at present a motion standing on the Orders of the House for a Joint Committee of both Houses to be appointed to inquire into the question of municipal trading. It has stood there for, I think, some weeks now, and the right hon. Baronet from the beginning of the session onwards has had many motions in respect of Private Bills in regard to municipal trading, and I cannot see that he is committing any breach of the privileges of the House or its Orders in inviting Members to attend, or express their interest in, a meeting in a committee-room for the purpose of considering a question which is about to come before a Joint Committee of both Houses. It appears to me quite in accordance with the common practice, and I cannot say that the hon. Member has brought before me anything that calls for my intervention.

Mr. Speaker.

*SIR JOHN LUBBOCK (London University): As I have been referred to personally, perhaps I may be allowed to say a few words. I only had notice of this question as I came into the House two or three minutes ago, and I think I might reasonably complain that I had not longer notice. Still, it is not material, as my answer is so simple. I have not been acting on behalf of the Telephone Company, but from the beginning of the session, at the request of the London and other Chambers of Commerce I have been opposing the extension of municipal trading, and it is on that ground that I oppose the present Bill. You, Sir, have been good enough to say that I have acted within my right. The hon. Member supposes I have some pecuniary interest in the National Telephone Company. But whether the Bill passes or not makes not the slightest difference to me in a pecuniary sense. I am, it is true, one of the trustees, not however for the company, but for the debenture-holders, and my duty as trustee simply is, if necessary, to protect the creditors against the company. I am not, however, myself a debenture-holder, nor do I hold a single share in the company. I have no pecuniary interest whatever in the matter, and hope, therefore, that the House will consider that the attack which the hon. Gentleman has thought fit to make upon me is quite uncalled for.

BOARD OF EDUCATION BILL.

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL FOR EDUCATION (Sir J. GORST, Cambridge University): The contents of the Bill of which I move the Second Reading are very well known already to the House, and have been the subject of considerable discussion, not only in another place, but out of doors among all those who take an interest in this question. But I feel it would not be respectful to the House of Commons if I did not say a few words in support of the Bill when I move the Second Reading, although I am afraid I may repeat observations which have been made elsewhere. The object of the Bill is to obtain statutory power and statutory sanction for a reconstruction of that Department of the State which has mostly to do, though not exclusively to do, with the education of the people in England

and Wales. The functions which the present Education Department exercise give it direct and complete control of the elementary education of most of the children in the country. It also, through that branch of the Education Department called the Science and Art Department, exercises a very considerable influence on the teaching of science and art, because it has the power of distributing the grant that is annually made by Parliament for the promotion of instruction in science and art, and it distributes it practically through the rules and regulations which it makes itself, of course with the consent of the Treasury ; and that gives it very considerable influence in the promotion of science and art teaching among the various schools of the country. It also has very limited powers in relation to technical instruction, derived from the Technical Instruction Act. That Act gives no real initiative to the Education Department, but it enables it to exercise a certain amount of supervision and control over the application of the funds in the hands of county councils and the funds which they may themselves raise by rate for technical instruction. But the Education Department has no power and no function whatever in relation to the general higher education of the country, in what is roughly and rather loosely called secondary education. The object of this Bill is to enable the Government to create a Department of State suitable and fitted to have conferred upon it powers in relation to secondary education, which it is believed that Parliament wishes to be granted to it. The Royal Commission on Secondary Education recommended that there should be a central authority, a Government Department, in London, to supervise secondary education, and local authorities in the country. The opinion of the Government is that the central authority in London must be created and arranged before the local authorities in the country can be usefully set on foot, and it is to organise and arrange a proper central Department in London to exercise the sort of functions recommended by the Royal Commission that this Bill has been brought before Parliament. The Bill proposes the abolition of the existing Committee of Council on Education, and to replace it by a Board of Education consisting of the First Lord of the Treasury, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and the Secretaries of State

for various Departments, having a President and a Parliamentary Secretary, in the same manner as the Local Government Board and the Board of Trade possess Parliamentary officials by whom the executive work of the Department is done. To this new Board of Education are to be transferred all the powers and functions which are at present exercised by the Committee of Council, so that it will stand in relation to educational matters and the distribution of the science and art grants and technical instruction exactly in the same position, and have exactly the same powers, as the present Education Department. Further, the Charity Commission is also dealt with. The functions of the Charity Commissioners in relation to education consist of two perfectly distinct parts. They exercise, first of all, a sort of judicial function, taking in this the place of the old Court of Chancery. They determine, in relation to any charitable fund, whether it is or is not applicable to educational purposes, and they determine this rather as a judicial body, exercising the functions formerly exercised by a court of law. Then their second, and entirely distinct, duty is, having determined the particular fund which is applicable to educational purposes, administratively to frame a scheme by which it is to be applied, and, after that scheme has come to have the force of law, to exercise certain functions in the way of inspection and visitation. This Bill does not propose to touch in any way the judicial functions of the Charity Commissioners. After the Bill has passed they will, as heretofore, have jurisdiction over charitable endowments, and they will be the Department to say whether any particular endowment is or is not applicable to the purposes of education. Of course, that is a power which they exercise under appeal to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council on all questions of law, and subject to the supervision of this and the other House of Parliament on all questions of policy. That power will, under this Bill, continue to be exercised just as at present by the Charity Commissioners. But with regard to their administrative functions, power is given in this Bill to transfer from time to time any part or the whole of those functions from the Charity Commissioners to the Board of Education. Nothing is actually transferred by the Bill itself, but the Bill gives power for the

transfer, by Order in Council, of any part of those administrative functions, subject to the condition that any such Order should be laid on the Table of both Houses of Parliament, and not come into force until it has so laid for four weeks. Besides that, sanction is given to the new Board of Education to inspect secondary schools under certain conditions. I suppose without Parliamentary sanction the Board of Education would have no right to exercise this function, but by the Bill the sanction of Parliament is given, and on the Board is cast the duty of looking into the secondary education of the country, either by inspectors of its own or by employing inspectors from the universities. It is also provided that this power is to be exercised with the consent of the managers, governing bodies, and proprietors of the schools so inspected, and if consent is obtained the inspectors may inquire into the character of the teaching given in those schools, into the provision made in the schools for teaching, and the number of teachers they have; also into the sanitary condition of all these schools as affecting the health of the pupils. Provision is also made enabling county and borough councils to apply the local taxation money, which by law is applicable to secondary instruction, to the payment of the expenses of inspectors under the Bill; but there is nothing in the Bill pledging the administration to the particular kind of inspection they will have.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): Will the inspection only be made on invitation from the school?

SIR J. GORST: Yes. In the ordinary schools they will have no power to inspect unless with the consent of the governing bodies and proprietors of the schools. Under many schemes which have become law under the Charity Commissioners the Charity Commission has certain compulsory powers which they can exercise, whether the governing bodies please or not, and those compulsory powers can be transferred to the Education Board.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.): May any private school invite inspection?

SIR J. GORST: No doubt any school may invite inspection, but there is no

Sir J. Gorst.

absolute compulsion on the Board of Education. It is not obliged to inspect any school, but it may inspect any school if inspection is asked for. The next feature is the creation of the Consultative Committee. A great deal has been said about a Consultative Committee, to which the Minister of Education should have recourse on any technical question upon which the Department itself is scarcely qualified to determine. It is proposed under the Bill to sanction the formation, by the Board of Education, of a Consultative Committee. The constitution, the numbers, and the mode in which it is to be applied, are not provided for in the Bill. It will be an experimental proceeding, and it is thought better to leave the appointment of the Committee and the conditions under which it is to hold office to the discretion of the President of the Board of Education. But a certain portion is to be representative of universities and other bodies taking an interest in education. In the view of the Government it would be a mistake to make this Committee into a Parliamentary Committee, so as to tie the hands of the President. It would be better if Parliament, at all events at the outset, would entrust the matter to the President of the Board of Education, who might from time to time make alterations in the constitution of the Consultative Committee as experience would show to be desirable. The functions of the Committee are two. In the first place, they are to make a register of teachers for England and Wales, and I think that the regulations will be framed in a generous and liberal spirit. It will be a register to which everyone can find access who is qualified to teach the higher subjects of education.

*SIR F. S. POWELL (Wigan): Is it to be confined to higher teaching?

SIR J. GORST: It is to be a register of teachers qualified to teach higher subjects. A great many elementary school teachers are so qualified, and they would, of course, be entitled to be put on the register. A great many representations have reached the Lord President of the Council, asking that the register should be applicable to Scotland and Ireland as well as to England. I am afraid it will be impossible to make this extension under the Bill. Personally, I think it a

great misfortune that the education of the three portions of the United Kingdom has been so divided ; but whatever may be our private opinion as to the advantage of such a separation, I am afraid that the register of teachers must follow the same course. There is nothing, however, to prevent any Irish or Scottish teacher who is qualified from being put on the register of England and Wales. Now I think I have described, as nearly as I can, the purposes of this Bill. This is not a Secondary Education Bill ; it is a Bill to make preparation for secondary education by establishing at headquarters such an organisation as will enable Parliament hereafter to confer upon those who have charge of education such functions and powers as the condition of the country in the matter of secondary education will require. I beg to move the Second Reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”

—(*Sir J. Gorst.*)

*MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): We are indebted to the right hon. Gentleman for the clearness with which he has brought this question before the House. The Bill, although small, is of enormous importance. The central principle of the Bill, which we heartily welcome, is the creation of a central authority to co-ordinate and stimulate and develop all branches of education. In view of the commercial competition in which we have to engage, it is essential to develop the technical and secondary and commercial education of the country as rapidly as possible, and place the whole system at the earliest moment on the maximum basis of efficiency. I have placed a notice on the paper, not in hostility to the principle of the Bill, but to obtain some assurances that local authorities will be created, and to raise the conditions under which they are to be created. So far as I can see we have no positive guarantee that there will be any local authorities established, or that there will be any local machinery created, during the present Parliament. This Bill will come into operation, we are told, on the 1st April, 1900, and it is therefore obvious that the central authority cannot be in operation with a view to the development of the local authorities for a considerable time after that date. The

Duke of Devonshire told us that the central authority was created for the purpose of guiding the local authorities, but this explanation in another place on this point was unsatisfactory, and we have a right to demand some assurance from the Government that we shall have an intelligible and workable scheme of local machinery within a reasonable time. I think the Bill is open to serious objection from its vagueness. Of course I do not expect that this Bill will be used by the Lord President of the Council and the right hon. Gentleman for a despotic and autocratic reconstruction of the education of this country. But in discussing this Bill we must bear in mind the central fact that this is a Bill to deal with the whole educational system of the country—elementary as well as secondary, and that we are giving very great powers to the new Department, as to which in the course of the Debate we should receive from the Government some assurance as to what the new Department will do, and what it will not do. But there is a question of still more urgent importance. The Department by the Bill will have extraordinary powers for delegating its most important functions of fixing the standard of education to other bodies. The fixing of the standard of education is a very serious matter, and should, in the opinion of many, remain solely in the hands of the Department. An important Amendment was obtained by my noble friend Lord Spencer in another place by which words were struck out of the Bill. The words were: “The Board of Education may, by their officers, or by any university or other organisation approved on that behalf by the Board, inspect, &c.” The words, “or other organisation,” were struck out of the Bill on the motion of my noble friend in the other House, and they were words of considerable danger, and I think it should be emphasised at the beginning of the Debate that if there is any attempt made to reintroduce those words it will be resisted to the utmost in their power by the friends of education. Many of us who were in the House during the Debates on the great and abortive Education Bill of 1896 will remember perfectly well that there was a feeling, as strong on the Government side as on the Opposition side of the House, that the proposals then made of delegating the supreme authority

of the Education Department of inspecting and testing education to all sorts of local committees, constituted in all sorts of ways, not specially responsible even to their own localities or to Parliament, and empowering them to fix the standard of education, was a serious danger. I think we ought to ask during the course of this Debate that we should have some guarantee against the indiscriminate delegation of these powers in constituting this central authority. All friends of education are delighted to see the Science and Art Department and the Education Department united, and to see the authority concentrated under one head, and we welcome the probable handing over of nearly all the educational functions of the Charity Commissioners to this new Board. I say we welcome all these proposals, and are willing to support them most heartily, but we must again, as we did in 1896, offer our determined hostility to the delegation of the authority of fixing the standard of education from the Department responsible to the House. I hope before we arrive at a further stage of the Bill that we may have all these points, and this point in particular, thoroughly cleared up. There are several details which had better be reserved for the Committee stage. So far as I am concerned I agree with the opinion given by the Archbishop of Canterbury that the proposed Consultative Committee is a superfluity not without its serious dangers. I hope that if this Consultative Committee is constituted in the Bill during its passage through this House we shall at least have the proposals which were made by the Royal Commission inserted in the Bill, that the appointment should be made for a certain specific period, and that these appointments shall be open to the revision of Parliament in case the Department in any sense passes over the bounds that Parliament intends, and in any way mischief arises in the working of this machinery. I wish also to express considerable doubt as to the advisability of devolving upon county councils the machinery for education to any larger extent. But what I wish to raise on the Second Reading is the broad question of principle. Her Majesty's Government are creating the most important engine created since 1870 for the development

and grouping together of all these branches of education, which are of the most vital importance to the future of the country. I think we have a right to ask for some guarantee, even at this stage, that certain principles shall be aimed at ultimately in carrying out the machinery of this Bill. The first is that education shall be continuous. Suggestions have been made in various Bills and proposals that secondary education should be separated from technical education, and that you should draw an absolute barrier between elementary and secondary education. By linking together elementary and technical and secondary education you will draw into the higher education the largest number of young people and make your whole system most effective. The second principle which I should like to insist on is that you should enlist the intelligent interest of the largest possible number in directly co-operating in the work of making your organisation efficient to meet the needs of the whole people. In emphasising that point I am insisting upon the view originally laid before Parliament by Mr. Acland, when, after the passing of the Technical Instruction Act in 1889, he put down a motion that the advantages of secondary and technical education could best be extended to all classes by a system of universal school boards in large areas. I support that view, and I ask Her Majesty's Government to favourably consider the plan of dealing with the whole series of the questions relating to elementary, technical, and secondary education laid before the country by my noble friend Lord Spencer last winter. His suggestion was that you ought to have directly elected educational authority everywhere to deal with elementary education, as a fundamental basis upon which to build your educational machinery for secondary education, which should be controlled by a body composed of representatives of the directly elected local authorities with representatives of the county council. While passing some time in Massachusetts (U.S.A.) I have felt a great envy at the way in which the great branches of education, from the elementary through the secondary and leading up to the university, are co-ordinated and are intelligently and vigorously worked by a local committee for the district, and a similar body deals in a similar way with the State. It co-ordinates and brings into regula-

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tion the whole State, and brings into operation and urges into activity those localities which are lagging behind and not doing good work. What is the gist of my suggestion? It is that Her Majesty's Government should frankly and honourably admit that the use of Article 7 of the Directory of the Science and Art Department to create these cabinet-window authorities to deal with secondary and higher elementary education is a mere stop-gap expedient, and that they should boldly say, We are going to replace this confusion of authorities and jurisdictions and claims and interests by a simple and intelligible and workable authority such as the friends of education can accept. I have had many communications, especially from the North of England, in the last few years as to work of the county technical committees. Some gentlemen are extremely proud of the work they do, and excellent work is now being done undoubtedly by such a body as the Technical Board in London. At the same time, I have had representations that the work of those committees is very often the work of one or two officials, and is therefore divested not only of popular control, but of popular interest. In many districts the working classes for whom the matter was of most importance did not take the interest they ought in the development of technical and higher education. The result of having a directly elected authority would be to bring the largest number of minds into contact with these problems, the working out of which was now left in the hands of a few well-intentioned experts, and that is an aspect of the question which should not be lost sight of. I have made one or two specific demands on the Government on this occasion. We ought to have a guarantee, with regard to inspection, that the Department retains its essential responsibility to the country, and we are entitled to say in the settlement of the local authority, that the principle shall be considered by the Government that the real interests of the masses would be best preserved by giving them a direct share in the working out of the new system of education.

*MR. JEBB (Cambridge University): The Government is to be congratulated on the introduction of this measure. It is confessedly of limited scope, but none the less on that account it is a measure of great importance. It takes a step

which is the first and indispensable condition of any better organisation of our system of secondary education. It would be vain to set up new local authorities if they had still to deal with the various unconnected agencies which share among them the central control of secondary education. You must begin by doing what this Bill does, by creating a strong central authority such as will command public confidence, and can take a survey of the whole educational field. I do not regard this measure as a small and tentative instalment of educational reform. I regard it as effecting in itself a large and far-reaching result. It creates an organ which is essential to the unity of any system of secondary education which may in the future be developed. I have observed, and I hope the hon. Member for East Northamptonshire will also note, that the Government, speaking through the Lord President of the Council in another place, made clear their intention that the institution of local authorities is to follow the institution of the central authority, and is to follow it at no distant date. It will be observed that this Bill mentions the 1st of April next year as the date upon which the Bill is to come into operation, and it has been asked why the date fixed was not the 1st of January. The Lord President answered that question in another place, and that answer was that the Science and Art Department, which has always been in law part of the Education Department, was now to be formally united with the Education Department under a single administrative head. The Science and Art Department is to be revised as soon as Parliament has sanctioned the principle of this Bill. It is in contemplation to appoint a Departmental Committee for the purpose of undertaking the revision of the constitution of the Science and Art Department at South Kensington, and that Departmental Committee must perform its work before the central authority sketched in this Bill can be fully constituted. Therefore it is necessary to give the Departmental Committee time to accomplish that work, and therefore the 1st of April has been named. But, as the Duke of Devonshire pointed out, that is no reason why the Bill for the institution of the local authorities should not be introduced next session. It is not necessary to defer that Bill until the

central authority is actually in operation. What is necessary is that, Parliament having passed a Bill for setting up the local authorities, the central authority shall be actually in operation before the constitution of these local authorities is taken in hand, because the central authority is the source to which those who have to constitute the local authorities would naturally look for guidance, advice, and information. The question of the transfer of the functions of the Charity Commission to the new Education Board is one of very great complexity, and one which engaged a great deal of attention in the Royal Commission on Education, which ultimately came to the conclusion that the whole of the educational faculties of the Charity Commissioners should be transferred to the Education Department. If such a transfer had been attempted in this Bill it would probably have made the Bill highly controversial. The Government, therefore, have been well advised in providing in this Bill that the transfer of the educational functions of the Charity Commission should be gradual and should be effected by Order in Council. One function of the Charity Commission, however, is transferred at once—namely, the function of examining schools subject to the Endowed Schools Acts. The Charity Commission under this Bill retain the power of determining what endowments are applicable to education, and when the Charity Commission have decided that, the future Board of Education will have the function of determining to what educational purpose the endowment shall be applied. There is a fear in some quarters lest this new Education Board should have a tendency to divert small endowments from primary to secondary education, but I venture to lay before the House this general consideration, which should tend to allay any such apprehension. The Charity Commission have had, for a long time, the power of so diverting small endowments from primary to secondary education; but, as a matter of fact, it has seldom exercised that power, for the reason that a proposal to do so generally excites strong local opposition. Such local opposition will be experienced by the new Education Board not less than by the Charity Commissioners. On the other hand, where the new Education Board and the inhabitants of a particular locality may agree that such an application of an endow-

ment now devoted to primary education was desirable, there should be facilities for effecting that change. Now I should like to say one word about the Consultative Committee. The hon. Member for Northamptonshire rather deprecated the Consultative Committee. The object of establishing the Consultative Committee was to place at the disposal of the new Education Board the advice of persons who had practical knowledge, and who were conversant with the details of secondary education. It was proposed in another place that the number should not be less than 12 or more than 25; and the Duke of Devonshire, while declining to fix the number in the Bill, indicated that those would be about the limits. In the Teachers' Registration Bill of last year the Teachers' Registration Council were to be 18. The Royal Commission proposed that its Education Council should not exceed 12 in number. We may take it, then, that something between 12 and 25 will be the number of this Consultative Committee. Not less than two-thirds of the members of that Consultative Committee are to be representatives of universities and other bodies interested in education. The functions of the committee are to frame regulations for forming the Register of teachers and to advise the Board of Education in the matter of the inspection of schools. The Consultative Committee is also to be taken into counsel on any matter referred to it by the board, but on such matters only. It is to have no statutory powers whatever. It is to be the creation of the Minister of Education, who can choose his own advisers, subject only to the proviso as to the two-thirds. The Minister will not be obliged to take the advice of this committee more than he sees fit to do so. I do not think, therefore, that those who are apprehensive that the control of secondary education might pass too much into the hands of educational experts have any reason to be alarmed by anything in this Bill. In administering the Army and Navy statesmen have at their disposal the advice of professional experts. To that extent, but no further, the statesman who directs education will have the assistance of educational experts. There is a further strong reason for appointing the Consultative Committee. The Bill takes power to inspect all schools for secondary education which it may be desirable

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to inspect, and schools subject to the Endowed Schools Acts will be liable to compulsory inspection by the new Board, as they are at present by the Charity Commissioners. It is not intended at present to undertake any complete or systematic inspection of secondary schools. For financial reasons alone that would not be possible. But many masters of public schools have signified their willingness to accept inspection under certain conditions, in the hope that their example will influence smaller schools, and because they believe it is to the public interest that there should be an ultimate possibility of a complete and systematic inspection. But many headmasters of public schools are naturally and rightly anxious to have every possible security that the inspection shall not be such as will impose a rigid uniformity of method or system. In elementary education such uniformity is to a certain extent inevitable, but in secondary education elasticity is indispensable. The headmasters of public schools feel that they could not have a better security for such elasticity than that the Minister of Education should, at all events occasionally, refer to the advice of persons who are intimately and practically acquainted with secondary and university education. The Headmasters' Conference, representing the great public schools, and the Incorporated Association of Headmasters, representing a very large number of other secondary schools, have passed resolutions that the Consultative Committee, though not statutory, should at least have an assured and permanent existence, and the Government have, very wisely, assented to that view. With regard to the omission, by an Amendment in another place, of the words in Clause 3, "or other organisation approved by the Department," it is most desirable that there should be imposed strict limits on the delegation of such authority by the Board of Education. But the Bill in its original form proposed that an organisation other than the universities, if approved by the Board, might be employed as an inspecting agency. There is something to be said in favour of reinstating the words which have been omitted, since the clause as it now stands cuts out the examinations of such valuable agencies as the College of Preceptors and the City Guilds, and others. The Government has not seen its way to sanction the

application of the beer-money to secondary education generally as distinguished from technical education. Possibly when we come in some future session to the constitution of local authorities for secondary education that point, which is more particularly pertinent to that part of the question, may come up again. Meantime, I note with satisfaction that Clause 4, which gives powers to counties and county boroughs to contribute towards the cost of inspection, makes no limitation to schools giving technical instruction. The Lord President of the Council has expressed the opinion that that clause is so far an extension of the limits with which the beer-money may be applied. It must be remembered how very important this Bill is for the commercial and technical education of the country, and therefore for all its commercial and industrial interests. The example of foreign countries, and pre-eminently that of Germany, teaches us that the best use of school time, even with a view to a commercial or industrial calling, is to train the intelligence. The basis of commercial and technical education should be liberal. To obtain such a liberal basis it is necessary to organise all our resources for secondary education. What is wanted is not so much fresh expenditure of money, but rather a better, more systematic and more intelligent adjustment of existing means and agencies. This Bill is the first and a large step in that direction—a step which ought to have been taken many years ago. Now that it has come let us give it a cordial welcome; and let us earnestly hope that the Government will see their way next session to introduce a Bill for setting up local authorities for secondary education.

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON (Oxford University): This measure is, in fact, a concentration of educational authorities in one Department. The new powers which are conferred upon this Department are not compulsory in their character. There is a power to inspect schools, but no school need be inspected unless it desires to be. There is a provision for the registration of teachers, but no disability falls upon any teacher who does not trouble to have his name on the register; there is a Consultative Committee, which seems to inspire alarm in some quarters, but the duty of consulting that committee, thrown upon the Board, does not appear

to be very onerous. And yet in regard to the secondary education of the country, I look upon this Bill as a very large and important measure. The question of local authorities is very wisely postponed until the central authority is created. The constitution of those authorities is a more difficult subject than that which is now before us, but I hope we shall deal with the difficulties as they arise, and not risk the progress of this measure by anticipating difficulties which do not arise in this Bill, and which this Bill will not in any way increase. As to the inspection of schools, so far from desiring that it should be limited strictly to the official members of the Board, I earnestly hope the Department will use all the existing agencies. I say nothing as to the demand which is made in other quarters for inclusion among the bodies which may, with the approval of the Board, be admitted to inspect schools; but I can answer for this, that at my own university there is a Board, acting jointly with members of the Cambridge University, which does inspect schools, and although the matter has not gone very far a considerable number of schools have been inspected by this Board, and there is every prospect that the demand will be increased, and such inspections continued. As regards the lower grade schools, there is another Board, confined to Oxford University, which does conduct examinations, and the examiner, who goes down to the school to examine *viva voce*, is encouraged to report as generally as he can upon the education of the school. I venture to hope that it will not be made more expensive for schools to be inspected and examined from the universities than from the Department. As regards the Consultative Committee, I cannot share the apprehensions which have been expressed. The Committee would, no doubt, consist of a body of persons interested in education. It has been said that they would be "faddists," and that their crotchets would seriously impair the working of any educational system. Everyone who has been engaged in teaching has his own views as to the best way in which subjects should be taught. I myself, having been engaged in teaching for more than twenty years, have very decided views as to the teaching of the subjects on which I have been engaged, but if I were to confer with some other gentleman who has been engaged in education as long as I have he would very

likely tell me that those views were, to a certain extent, "fads." I do not say that I should agree with him. But I do say that a subject so large and various in character as secondary education should be under the guidance of persons possessed of ample knowledge, and should be treated with a light hand. There is another point to which I wish to refer—viz., the registration of teachers. It is, no doubt, to be voluntary, but our hopes are that it may become a matter of honour and distinction to be on the register. And in order to be placed on the register there must be evidence of qualification—not only of general attainments exemplified by university degrees, or some such certificate of a good general education, but there must ultimately be a test of examination of some sort. I know there is a great mass of expert opinion in favour of the training and examination of teachers. I believe that outside expert opinion there is a very general belief that anybody can teach anything so long as he has obtained a university degree, and possibly has also distinguished himself in athletic amusements at school or college. On the other hand, it is said that the art of teaching is incommunicable, and that no one who is not a born teacher can possibly teach. My own view is something which lies between these two extremes. There is no doubt that in the past, and to a certain extent in the present, we have suffered from the belief that anybody could teach. On the other hand, I do not believe that teaching is an incommunicable art, and not to be imparted to another. Undoubtedly, there are born teachers, the great headmasters and professors like Arnold and Jowett, whose pupils fill great offices in Church and State, just as there are born orators and statesmen inevitably destined to occupy the front benches. But I hope and believe that, as there are a very considerable number of persons who, if they are modest and industrious, may, in time, become useful Members of the House of Commons, so there are a great many who—if they are taught how to teach, and required to have a certain amount of practice before they are turned loose upon a school, who if they are content to learn, as a teacher must learn, that he must understand the difficulties of other minds, and distinguish the difficulties which arise from honest stupidity and the difficulties which arise from perverse ingenuity—may become useful,

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if not eminent, in their vocation. But they must be content with small results, hope for little, and hope too that, although the apparent results are disappointing, they may have done some good to those who have passed through their hands. It is contended that before registration there should be an examination in the theory and history of education. You may say that is not very valuable; but if a man is going to be a teacher, it is as well that he should know what other people have thought upon the subject, and what is its history. There is such an examination at Cambridge, and also at my own university. I was looking at these examination papers the other day. I know that I could not answer the questions, and in consequence I regarded them with a mixture of anxiety and dislike. I know that there are hon. Members of this House who have encyclopædic knowledge, and the papers are at their service. I welcome this proposal for the registration of teachers, not only because it will impress upon them that they have something to learn before they teach others, but because it will impart a sense of comradeship in the great profession of teaching which I believe to be one of the most honourable which any man can follow. I would say, in conclusion, that I know it is never wise to expect too much from legislation, and this Bill is studiously modest in its character. Yet I do hope that if it is honestly and generously welcomed and worked by the various bodies which may come under its purview, as I feel sure it will be by the universities, it will be the first step towards the co-ordination and harmonising of the secondary education of the country.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I hope I may be allowed to express the pleasure with which I have listened to the lucid, interesting and eminently practical speech of my hon. friend who has just sat down; and also the pleasure which is felt by a member of the University of Oxford at the fact that the members of that university have used their right to return to Parliament one who has long held so distinguished a place within its walls. It is a very great satisfaction to those of us who are attached to our university and who are interested in the cause of education to see two such distinguished representatives of the two

ancient universities, and that these representatives, so eminent by their learning and scholarship, should associate themselves at once with our discussions on this Bill, and should make such valuable contributions as they have done to our debates. I hope we shall often have the benefit of similar contributions from them. The Bill is a dry Bill; and it must be admitted that the subject is rather a dry subject. It is dry in the first place because it is technical, and in the second place because it is not controversial. There is no Party heat or excitement to be had out of the Bill in its present shape. It is a very important Bill, much more important than the House might have gathered from the speech of the Vice-President of the Council. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will forgive me if I say that I have seldom heard so important a measure introduced in so perfunctory a way. He appeared to minimise the Bill, and he played what musicians call the *diminuendo*; he showed the House what the Bill did not contain, but dwelt very little indeed on the points of the Bill, which were subsequently explained by the two hon. Members who have just spoken. I think that is rather a pity, as it obliges me to go a little more into detail than I would otherwise do. One expected from the right hon. Gentleman an explanation of the Bill, which he admitted himself was somewhat vague, somewhat obscure, and rather in the nature of a blank cheque, to be filled up by the Education Department. It is not very easy to criticise a blank cheque; and while a blank cheque contains great possibilities which may be used in different ways, it becomes rather essential to convey to the House what the possibilities are and to point out the different uses that may be made of the Bill. This Bill is the first attempt on the part of this House to deal with secondary education. As the right hon. Gentleman perfectly truly said—and I have no quarrel with anything he did say—the Bill has been conceived in a very judicious spirit, though it is a very little Bill.

SIR J. GORST: I think the right hon. Gentleman ought not to accuse me of that. There is not the slightest shadow of foundation for it. I think he himself thought very little of the Bill a short time ago.

MR. BRYCE: I beg to withdraw, of course, what I said, but that was the impression I gathered from the right hon. Gentleman. Everybody agrees as to the evils of the present system; everybody holds that there is a great deal of competition, overlapping, and waste, a great deal of unnecessary expenditure and unnecessary labour in the working of the different authorities, which, to a large extent, conflict the one with another, and therefore overlap. What everyone wants is to organise secondary education so as to get rid of competition and overlapping among the different authorities, and to bring them into just relations and harmony, and to co-operate for the common aim. That involves two processes—the organisation of the local authorities, and the organisation of the central authority. This Bill does not touch the local authorities at all. It passes them by. It deals with the central authority only. My hon. friend the Member for East Northamptonshire seems to think that it would have been better if the Government had brought in a Bill dealing with the whole matter. I subscribe, however, to the view that the Government have done right in presenting a Bill dealing only with the organisation of the central authority. In the first place, to deal with the whole subject would have been a large task, would have occupied much time, and would have involved much controversial matter. And, in the second place, it must be of great advantage to the local authorities that they should find a central authority already in being which would take their infants by the hands and guide their wavering steps. I hold that it was wise to deal with the central authority first. Let me say further that the object at which the Bill aims is right. It proposes to connect elementary with secondary education; it proposes to unify university and secondary education and bring them under one Education Department; and it proposes to collect the different funds now applicable to secondary education into one, which will be administered upon common principles. Further, it proposes to bring the endowed schools of the country into that organic relation with the secondary schools which ought to have been made long ago. These are all excellent objects, and I do not find in the Bill anything that one can object to as being positively wrong. What I com-

plain of in the Bill is rather its defects in vagueness and obscurity. It entrusts to the Government an uncontrolled discretion which it is not wise to entrust to any Government, even in the matter of education. One merit, however, the Bill must be admitted to have. It scrupulously avoids all controversial topics. I wish very much it had included a proposal to deal with the technical education money under the Act of 1890, but the Government apparently thought that that would be a little outside the scope of the Bill, and perhaps that would be true. I hope that the Government will adopt the same course which was adopted with so much firmness and judgment by the Lord President in the other House, and will keep this Bill entirely on its present lines, and not allow it to be extended so as to deal with any controversial topic, and particularly with any topics which excite ecclesiastical controversy. If the Government resist any attempt to bring in those topics, which are really irrelevant, I believe the Bill will become law easily and speedily, because I am not aware that there is a disposition—at any rate on this side of the House—to offer to it any opposition. But if those topics should be unfortunately introduced I think it does not require the gift of great prophecy to see that the Bill will have a troubled course, and it will be found very difficult to put it on the Statute Book this session. To come to the provisions of the Bill, which may cause a good deal of disappointment, I would like to call attention to them under the five different topics to which they relate. The first is the creation of a Board of Education; the next is the method of dealing with the Charity Commission; the third is the provision for inspection; the fourth is the Consultative Committee; and the fifth is the registration. In the first place, why have a Board of Education at all? Why a "Board"? Why not a secretaryship? Of course, it may be said that a secretaryship would set up a new Secretary of State. But why not have a secretary like the Secretary for Scotland, who is not a Secretary of State? The only argument I have heard in favour of the proposal is that it enables one Minister to act for another in his absence, but surely that is hardly a sufficient reason for multiplying the existing boards. The Bill extinguishes one old friend, the Committee of Council on Education, just at a

time when it had become not only familiar, but, I had almost said, beloved by the House and by the country, and the Vice-President himself vanishes just at the moment when he had succeeded in showing us how interesting and novel might be the relations of the Vice-President of the Council with the rest of the Government. But we should like to know what is to become of the Science and Art Department. That is one of the important things upon which we have no light in this Bill. We are told that there is to be another Bill. The subject of the Science and Art Department has been under consideration for at least four years, and it is quite time we knew whether the Science and Art Department is to be kept a distinct body or blended in the Secondary Education Department. Now, I come to the Charity Commission. The method of dealing with the Charity Commission is by far the most difficult, intricate, and controversial part of this proposal. That it is difficult is proved by the fact that this House has repeatedly investigated its working by Committees, and the greatest difference of opinion has been found to exist in regard to the manner in which it ought to be handled. The present measure does not in the least attempt to solve the difficulty. The Bill, as it were, walks up to it, looks the difficulty boldly in the face, and then passes by. The Charity Commission was originally a branch of the Court of Chancery, and it has two sets of work—the work under the Charitable Trusts Act and the work under the Endowed Schools Act. I think the right hon. Gentleman's recollection must fail him for the moment when he said that the appeal from the Charity Commission lies with the Judicial Committee. The appeal from the Charity Commission lies with the High Court of Justice. The two kinds of jurisdiction which the Charity Commission has are rather inextricably intermixed. They cannot without the greatest difficulty be separated, and that is the difficulty which this Bill ought to solve. It has not touched it. The Bill draws no line whatever between the powers that are and the powers that are not to be transferred. It does not say that the Order will transfer the powers relating to the Endowed Schools Act. In fact, if all the powers that the Charity Commission needs to conduct its over-

sight of educational matters are transferred, the House will have set up by this Statute a second Charity Commission. There would be two authorities, both exercising the same powers, and exercising them over the same schools, and perhaps from different views of policy. One would hardly think that that can be contemplated, but it is clearly within the powers of the Bill, and I think it would not only perpetuate the existing confusion, but be found very vexatious and annoying to the schools themselves, because it would subject them to double inspection and double control—first by the Education Department, and then by their old friends the Charity Commission. I therefore think that the consideration of these difficulties will satisfy the House that the Bill really does not go to the root of the question. But there is another point which ought to be referred to. The Bill gives power to make such provision as appears necessary for the exercise by the Board of Education of the enactments relating to the Charity Commission. But if the powers of the Charity Commission are transferred to the Education Department, what becomes of those provisions which contemplate a Charity Commission apart from the Education Department? Clearly the Endowed Schools Acts will require to be re-drawn for that purpose. What we are asked to do, or at any rate what it is possible to do under this Bill, is to give power to the Education Department in the form of an Order of the Privy Council, to re-draft the Endowed Schools Acts, and to introduce new enactments which will be required to meet the new condition of things. I think it is going rather beyond the very wide latitude which we have lately been accustomed to give to Government Departments in legislating by way of Order. If we are going to modify in many important points these existing enactments, if we are going to deal with the new state of things created, we surely ought to submit those provisions to Parliament, and have them discussed here in Committee. No Order can do it properly, because no Order can be discussed in this House. Even if an Order is laid before the House, it is not the same thing as discussing it in Committee in this House, and therefore I submit it is too much to ask the House to give these powers without some information as to the scheme which the Govern-

ment have in their minds. Everything, in fact, will depend on the Order, and the Order is not before us. The simplest course would have been for the Government to propose to take over the Charity Commission altogether. I do not deny that there are objections to be taken to that course. Those who have read the Reports of the two Commissions which have sat on the subject know what are the objections raised, but they seem on the whole to be rather less than the objections which will arise by adopting the plan of the Government. We shall be landed, I think, by this Bill into a number of difficulties which would at any rate be avoided if the Charity Commission were bodily incorporated with the Education Department. The question of inspection illustrates what I was endeavouring to put before the House with regard to the position of the Charity Commission. The inspection proposed by this Bill is not the inspection of the Charity Commission, and that is the only point on which I was not able to agree with the speech of my hon. friend the member for Cambridge University. I understood him to say that the inspection of the Charity Commission was to be taken over under this Bill. But the inspection contemplated in Clause 3 is not quite the inspection which is carried on by the Charity Commission. It is really the complement to that which is carried on by the Charity Commission. It has been already observed that the inspection under this Bill is to be optional. It is so much an optional inspection that it is not compulsory even as regards health. That seems to me to be an unfortunate defect in the Bill. We are all agreed that the health of children is a matter which might rightly and properly be dealt with in a compulsory way by Statute. That was a point on which the Education Commission were unanimous, as well as the witnesses, and it is clearly a matter of the utmost concern, and one to which I think even a private school would have no right to object. I do not quite understand how much the Government contemplate by this inspection. The Secondary Education Commission recommended that inspection should be left to local authorities. It is true they took the safeguard of providing that the inspectors should all be persons who had been approved by the central authority, the Education Department; but it seems to me that the Government

would probably have done better to have reserved the inspection of local schools for their measure dealing with local authorities, rather than to have thrown this extremely large task upon the Education Department. There is a considerable advantage in giving the inspection to local authorities. They would probably have to make the grant, and it is better that those who make the grant shall make the inspection on which that grant depends. The Bill is extremely uncertain and doubtful about the Consultative Committee. In the first place, we are told that it is to consist of "persons representing universities and other bodies interested in education." Now the word "representing" is ambiguous. It may mean persons chosen by universities and other bodies interested in education, but it may also mean persons who are qualified to represent the views and interests of those bodies, but who may be appointed by some other authority. Of course, all universities are interested. Then I suppose it would be admitted that such a body as the College of Preceptors, or the Teachers' Guild, or the Head Masters' Association, or the Head Masters' Conference are interested. Then the technical instruction committees of the county councils are interested; the borough councils are interested; chambers of commerce are interested; and the Association of Municipal Corporations which deal with these things are also interested. Then, as the noble Lord the Member for Rochester observed, the National Society are interested, and I suppose the National Union of Teachers are interested. In fact, there are a very large number of bodies who may be interested, but I think it would be extremely difficult to find any of those bodies having a special claim to be represented. I hope that the Government, either now or in Committee, will give us some indication of their views on that subject. Then, we should like to know whether the proceedings of this Consultative Committee are to be private or not. We understood from what passed in another place that the proceedings are to be private, like those of the Council of India, but perhaps the Government will give us some information on the subject. It will make a good deal of difference to the view we take in Committee. Then, we ought to know for what term the members are to be ap-

pointed. It is clear that if we give the Government the power of filling up this Consultative Committee we ought to know for how long members are to be appointed, because the House will scarcely be disposed to give any Government power to fill these positions for a great number of years. One of the two functions which the Consultative Committee has to discharge is that of registration, but the Bill contains no provision for the creation of a proper register. I was rather surprised to hear the right hon. Gentleman speak as if we were to understand that the Bill establishes a register of teachers. I should have thought that there ought to have been an express provision in the Bill for the creation of a register if it is to have any effect. Does the Government intend that the holding of a place on the register shall have a legal effect, similar, for instance, to that of being on the register of the Medical Council? It is very doubtful whether the Education Department is the right body to keep this register. It is a professional matter, and hardly a matter to put into the hands of a Government Department. Ought not the profession itself to run the register, in the same way that the Medical Council work the "Medical Register"? Another function of the Consultative Committee is to advise, but this provision goes a good deal beyond what has been contemplated. Whenever this power has been spoken of before it has always been with reference to secondary education. But here the Government purpose to give this body equal jurisdiction and equal scope in the matter of elementary education also. Is it, indeed, equally desirable to import the Consultative Committee into such a controversial arena as elementary education, with all its dangers? There is, for example, some danger that the Consultative Committee may advise the Education Minister to take some action which may place him in a disagreeable dilemma. The Minister may be pressed to convoke the Committee on some controversial question by an hon. Member, or by public opinion outside. He may, of course, refuse to yield to the request, but still it is not pleasant for a Minister to let it appear as if he were afraid to consult the Committee. There are a number of other points in the Bill which I will not trouble the House

with because I have detained it long enough. I have analysed the Bill somewhat minutely, because it seems to be essential for the House to know how nebulous when it is analysed are its provisions, how very little it tells the House as to what would happen when the Orders in Council are made which it contemplates. It is a leap in the dark, as to the results of which even the Government seems to be as much in the dark as the House itself. The Bill evades the difficulties of the question with so much caution that it suggests to me either that the Government has a divided mind as to the method of treatment, or else that they are afflicted with different counsels—either different views prevail among the members of the Government which it is thought desirable to conceal by looseness of phraseology in the Bill, or the Government have not made up their minds which view they should take as to these difficult problems. It is a pity that the House has not received more guidance from the Government than that which is vouchsafed by the Bill. It is very difficult to say what will emerge from it. At the same time, these defects do not prevent me from expressing hearty satisfaction at the fact that the Bill has been brought forward, and that at last we are taking a definite step forward and doing something to grapple with what has been one of the greatest defects of our educational system—namely, the absence of an organised authority to deal with secondary education. We all remember how this question was laid before the country by Mr. Mathew Arnold, who I regret is not alive to see what he wished come to pass. This measure may be worked so as to produce great good to the country, and I accept the Bill, and those on this side of the House are all disposed to accept it; and I will venture to say, in conclusion, that, if the head of the ship be carefully steered away from those rocks and shoals of controversy which endanger most educational proposals in this House, we can venture to prophesy for the Bill a smooth, easy, and safe passage to its desired haven.

*MR. GRANT LAWSON (York, N.R., Thirsk): One of the features of this Bill is that it to a certain extent curtails the powers of the Charity Commissioners in educational matters. This may commend itself to some hon. Members, and I

certainly do not on this occasion raise objection to that particular clause in the measure. Let it not be understood that I stand here as the representative of the Charity Commissioners to object to this Bill. The Charity Commissioners have always recognised that their powers over endowed schools are provisional and temporary. The Charity Commissioners have worked in a friendly manner with the Committee of Council for Education for years, and I have no doubt that in the future they will work well with the new bodies proposed to be established. Hon. Members need not be afraid of double inspection and double control. The Charity Commissioners have plenty of work to do, and they have no need to go and seek for work. The last speaker suggested the alternative that the Charity Commission and its work should be taken over by the Board of Education now to be set up. I should certainly oppose any such suggestion, on the ground that there are many charities which rest on the boundary line between educational and eleemosynary purposes, and if we diverted any of the moneys devoted to eleemosynary purposes there would very soon be a vote of censure in this House. There is one matter in this Bill which commends itself to me, as it will relieve the Charity Commissioners from an absolutely impossible position. The hon. Gentleman forgets the possible interruptions to any scheme put forward by the Charity Commissioners at one stage. The Charity Commissioners, after long labour and after the fullest investigation, draft a scheme which then has to be submitted to the President of the Council, who considers the objections and approves or disapproves the scheme. The objections are generally made by some local Member, who is put up in this House more often than not by a gentleman whose child is receiving education from one of the Charity Commissioners' endowed schools to which he is not entitled, and then after a short discussion in this House, generally taken after midnight, unless the Government, whose President of the Council is responsible for their appearance in the House, chose to protect them, the result of all those years of labour is overthrown. That has been the result of a good many schemes, and I think it is right that, according to the Bill, more direct responsibility for the schemes should be thrown on the head of

the Education Department. The Charity Commissioners are not anxious to enter into any controversial question; and since I have had the honour of a seat on the Board, with one exception, no scheme has been passed and afterwards brought to this House. I hope that the result of the Bill will cause the President of the Board of Education to be recognised as a Minister for whose ministerial acts his colleagues share the responsibility. This will be satisfactory to the Charity Commissioners, but exceedingly embarrassing to the Government of the day. To make the best use of these educational endowments you want above all things independence and impartiality—impartiality as between different denominations, different localities, and different classes of persons. But of all the virtues impartiality is the most odious to the multitude. The result of the Bill will be that the honourable odium, which at present attaches to the Charity Commissioners, will attach to the head of the new Board of Education and to the Government of which he is a member, and I have grave doubts whether the Minister of Education will have the same invulnerable constitution and robust conscience as the Charity Commissioners. But, given a strong Minister, backed up by his colleagues, it is obvious that the Board of Education would do far more for secondary education than the Charity Commissioners have been able to do with their limited powers. The Charity Commissioners have always been compelled to look on each school as a unit and not as part of a general educational system, and it has been found very hard to move a school from a locality where there are too many, and they have no power to prevent educational authorities setting up entirely unnecessary schools. The principal use that the Charity Commissioners would be to the new Board would be in supplying them with a trained staff of experts whose services would be invaluable. If both efficiency and economy are considered, all these gentlemen will find permanent posts on the new Board of Education. The strongest ground for the present Bill is to be found in the state of confusion and divided authority which at present exist in regard to educational matters. The Report of the Royal Commission states that within the same town or district the local power over secondary education may be shared between the county or

Mr. Grant Lawson.

borough council, the school board, various governing bodies, managing committees of proprietary schools, local committees under the Science and Art Department, and managers of Voluntary schools; and each of these local agencies must or may have relations with one or two or, perhaps, three central authorities which were similarly independent of each other. Speaking, not as a Charity Commissioner, but as a private Member, who has taken a great deal of interest in education, I think the first duty of the new Board will be to discover some definition of the word "elementary." So far as I know there is no legal definition of that word except in the Act of 1870, which says that an elementary school is a school in which the main portion of the teaching given is elementary. That is a definition founded on the undefined. The absence of a clearly defined boundary line between elementary and secondary education does an infinity of mischief. It encourages trespass, it is very hard upon the teachers, who are expected to know everything nowadays, and it casts upon the ratepayers the cost of many subjects which are not elementary. I believe there is plenty of money already granted to give to the children of those parents who are not able to pay for it education sufficient for their fullest capacities. So much money is wasted at present because the dull child cannot acquire these higher subjects, and the bright child would acquire them a great deal better in a secondary school. I hope the Board of Education will be able to provide a scheme under which elementary subjects will be so implanted in the child that it will take something little short of a surgical operation to eradicate them. This process should go on long enough for a certain safe distinction to be made between the children to whom book learning, as it is called, is possible and valuable and the children to whom it is not. The latter would go to work for which, perhaps, they had some aptitude, and the former would go on with their education at the expense of the State as high as their ambition or their talents would carry them. It is because I believe that only such a central authority as is now proposed can give a business-like system of education of that kind that I support the Bill.

*MR. BIRRELL (Fife, W.): The Vice-President of the Council was taken to

task with unnecessary asperity by the right hon. Member for South Aberdeen for the somewhat subdued and melancholy tones in which he introduced a Bill which not only abolishes himself, but that Committee which he has with such infinite skill introduced on many occasions to the notice of the House. The hon. Member for Cambridge University, in speaking of this new Board, spoke of it as a strong body and one well fitted to grapple with the great problem of education; but after all, the new Board would only be a Party body, and it is difficult to see how it is to possess the strength which it ought to possess if the education of this country is to be, as I hope it some day may be, removed from Party considerations and treated as a great national work in which all are equally concerned. That this is to be a political and uninstructed body is proved by the way in which the Government have called from the vasty deep another phantom called the Consultative Committee, which may be a good thing, though I doubt it. This Committee is to teach the Board its business. The Lord President always speaks when it is necessary for him to do so on educational matters in a manner which clearly shows how greatly disqualified he considers himself to be to speak upon such a subject. I myself am rather sorry to see the Consultative Committee constructed as it is in this Bill. It will soon be as stereotyped as the Board itself. There is one question upon which I should like to have some information. While the Education Department has acquired a considerable amount of information with regard to primary or elementary education, it does not know very much about secondary education. But the Endowed School Commissioners, working under useful Acts of Parliament passed in 1869 and 1874, are essentially experts, and have garnered a great amount of experience in the management of secondary schools. Is it proposed to annex the Charity Commissioners by this Bill? The language of the Bill is extremely vague, and I doubt whether it is possible, by a mere Order in Council, to carry over to this new Board all the provisions of the Acts of 1869 and 1874. Those provisions proceed entirely on the basis that there should be an Educational Department to whom the schemes prepared by the Charity Commissioners should be submitted, and if that body is to be destroyed

or altered in any way the whole gear of the machinery is destroyed. I really do not see how, by an Order in Council, these very important Statutes, under which a great amount of good has been done, can be practically repealed. The Vice-President told us there was to be no interference with what he called the "judicial" work which the Charity Commissioners now do in determining questions as to the allocation of charitable endowments to educational purposes. But my point is in regard to the administrative work. If the Charity Commissioners are not to be annexed, the new Board will be a very phantom body, with very little work to do. As to the adjustment of the claims of higher grade Board schools and Grammar schools, it is of the utmost importance that some way should be discovered whereby these two classes of schools should be placed under one authority, and assigned their respective rights, so that there should be no jealousy or rivalry between them, but that one should feed the other in due and proper course. Elementary teachers appear to think they can teach everything; but I do not share that faith, and it is very important that this process of distinguishing and separating, but yet carrying on in harmony, the work of the elementary schools and the really secondary schools of the country should be completed. The Endowed School Commissioners are now engaged in this useful work. I was much alarmed by reading that some sort of instruction seemed to have been given to the Charity Commissioners to suspend for the next two years their operations in that direction, and not to carry out the Acts except where absolutely necessary. That is certainly carrying administration a little too far; it is suspending by an administrative Order the useful powers and work of the Endowed Schools Commissioners, and amounts to the suspensory power which in times past has cost monarchs their crown. If it be the intention of Her Majesty's Ministers to take over the Charity Commission, well and good; the new Board will then have very important powers and functions to exercise; but unless that is done, this Bill, instead of consolidating and concentrating authorities, will only make confusion worse confounded.

Mr. Birrell.

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE (Rochester): Undoubtedly it is high time that secondary education should be dealt with. Nobody feels more than myself how important it is that the necessary provision should be made to meet the wants of secondary education, that the existing confusion should be removed, and that there should be some means of giving the public a guarantee both of the efficiency of the schools and of the teachers. But in approaching a solution of this problem the Government have given to the world a Bill which, I think, well deserves the charge of vagueness which has been made against it. The Education Department is a very remarkable Department. It is sometimes loquacious, as in its Code; it is sometimes extremely reticent, as in this Bill; but it is always obscure. It is extremely difficult to fix the precise meaning of the proposals they make either to school managers or teachers, or of the proposals they make to Parliament. I hope the Second Reading of this Bill will be carried, but in many respects it will require very careful consideration. The question of the contributions from local sources for the purposes of inspection has the same vagueness as the rest of the Bill. Are the local authorities to contribute the whole or part of the expense? Is the Imperial authority to contribute any part? If so, in what proportion is the amount to be shared? As to the provisions for the registration of teachers, they are probably the greatest success in the direction of reticence that the Department has achieved. The subject is not new; it has been before both Houses on previous occasions. It was before the other House last session in a Bill which dealt with the subject in great detail, and consisted of five pages and 20 clauses. Those 20 clauses have reappeared in the present Bill in the form of about 20 lines. Doubtless that alteration has been made in order not to raise discussion. Clause 2 is very important. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Aberdeen congratulated the Government upon having left the question of local authorities for a future occasion, so that subjects of acute controversy would be avoided. But you cannot escape these questions of controversy; they come up sooner or later, and the wise man would meet and deal with them at once. I doubt the wisdom of the supersession of the Charity Commissioners. While not admiring everything

the Charity Commissioners have done, I think they are an impartial body, and I regret to see them evicted from any control of educational endowments under the Endowed Schools Acts. It may be said that the clause does not propose to transfer the whole of the power immediately, but I assume that that is what will be done, because the Government attempted last year to make a division of the power as between the Charity Commission and the Committee of Council for Education, and the proposal was not very satisfactory. We are always bound to assume that the whole power will pass out of the hands of this House when we know that the House is going to lose all opportunity of preventing it, and will have to submit if that is the case. Clause 5 is supposed to preserve the control of Parliament. A clause of that sort appears in a great number of Acts of Parliament, but there are two forms of phraseology used. One is that it should be laid upon the Table of both Houses of Parliament for a certain number of days before it becomes operative, and the other is that if during that period either House carry an Address to the Crown objecting to the proposed Order or part of it, it ceases to be operative and is thrown out. As a general rule Radical Governments adopt the first form, and Conservative Governments the second, and for very obvious reasons; but I regret that on this occasion the Radical form has been adopted, which reduces the control of Parliament to a minimum. As regards the transfer of the powers of the Charity Commission, there is no doubt it is possible to so transfer them, because there is a clause in the Endowed Schools Act, 1869, which provides that any Order upon any scheme issued under the powers of the Act is conclusive. All we require to know is how the Government will interpret the power which is given to them under this clause. When we find that the powers under the Endowed Schools Act with regard to endowments are to be handed over to the Board of Education I naturally proceed to consider what protection is likely to be afforded to certain endowments which may be dealt with. The clauses dealing with the conditions upon which endowments may be used for educational purposes are very inadequate, and may be interpreted with great severity as against the apparent purpose

of the endowment. At present the power is wielded by the Charity Commissioners. We are setting up a system of secondary education all over the country—that I subscribe to and support—and in consequence there will be an immense amount of educational zeal brought to bear upon every sort of endowment which may by any possibility be laid under contribution, and there is very little doubt that the Act of Parliament will be interpreted rigidly and fully, and without any kind of that elasticity which tempers the wind to the shorn lamb. That power is to be transferred from the Charity Commissioners to a Minister who, whoever he may be, must be a partisan. He is not a judicial person, and is not, generally, judicially minded. His object is to carry out a policy which may be agreeable to his own convictions and his own political faith, and his whole bias is very properly against all the restrictions which an Act of Parliament may seem to place in the way of fully developing that policy. This Minister will not only be a partisan, but he will preside over the Education Department, and in matters of law that Department are not very well advised. On one occasion I had to approach the Department on behalf of one of my constituents who wanted to build a school room 30 feet wide, and the Department held that for the purposes of calculating the cubic space the width must be counted as 27 feet, because they had a rule that if a room was not 37 feet wide it must be considered to be 27 feet wide, and they proposed to treat it on those terms. The House will remember what took place with regard to the Berriew schools, where the Department were advised that their action in allowing certain signatures to a petition to be withdrawn was legal, but which, when the law officers of the Crown were consulted, was declared to be absolutely illegal, and great trouble had to be taken in three sessions of Parliament to get a special Act to set right that illegality. Some of the provisions in the Endowed School Act are very arbitrary and inequitable, and the Charity Commissioners are placed in a very difficult position. They are very often bound to rule that an endowment is not a Church of England endowment which in all equity is a Church of England endowment. What resource have we? We come to this or the other House and point out that a great injus-

tice has been committed, and the curious position of the law is that while the Charity Commissioners are bound by those arbitrary conditions the Houses of Parliament are not, but can act according to the equities of the case, and set right the injustice which the Charity Commissioners have been forced to commit. The question is not made a Government question; it comes to us perfectly free, and we vote according to our conscience—or so much of our conscience as may be awake after midnight, when these Orders come up for consideration—and there is a chance of justice being done. What will be the position under this clause? These Church of England endowments will have this tremendous educational zeal applied to them, and being pushed in that way into the melting pot will come before the Educational Department, who, anxious to lay everything under contribution, will not act mildly, but will pass a scheme which will be laid upon the Table of the House. Shall we be able to vote freely upon it after 12 o'clock? Of course not; it will be a Party question. Consequently there will be none of that resource which at present exists for correcting an admitted inequity. It may not be possible to save the Charity Commissioners, but if the Endowed Schools Acts are to be applied with rigour and without there being, practically, any control left to independent Members of this House, they ought to be amended. We ought to look into these definitions to see that they are really equitable and not arbitrary before we allow the Charity Commissioners to be disestablished and the Education Department put in their place. I have naturally dwelt upon the religious provisions, but there are others which requires very careful treatment, such as the local claim on which independent Members of the House have an independent say, and are able to prevent injustice being committed to the localities which they represent. I shall not dwell upon the omissions of the Bill. It does not deal with over-lapping, or the definition of elementary education; it does not determine whether school boards are to supply secondary education or not. That is a matter which is absolutely urgent—more urgent even than the abolition of the Department of Science and Art. At present the question whether school boards may supply secondary education is being

Viscount Cranborne.

tried before the Auditor in London, but whatever decision is arrived at the matter is urgent, because if the Auditor decides that the London Board has no right to supply secondary education something will have to be done in the secondary schools the school boards already supply. If the decision is in the opposite sense, we must look forward to a great extension of the activities of the school boards in that direction, and the House ought to have a very early opportunity of making up its mind whether these bodies who are not limited in the extent to which they may draw upon the pockets of the rate-payers are to be allowed to supply secondary education. The Bill does not deal with what ought to be the degree of religious education insisted upon by the State. The right hon. Gentleman opposite hoped the House would not deal with controversial matters; I hope it will.

MR. BRYCE: I said, if the Government desire to get the measure through the House this session. At this period of the session a controversial Bill could not get through the House, and I desire this Bill to pass.

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE: I thought the right hon. Gentleman was one of those who declare there is no religious question in connection with secondary schools. There are a large body of gentlemen who hold that view. We were told when the Welsh Secondary Education Act passed that no religious question would arise, but I cannot say how many hours after 12 o'clock I have been engaged in trying to decide the way in which the religious education question ought to be settled in connection with that Act.

MR. BRYCE: I do not think the noble Lord understands the view of the gentlemen to whom he refers. What they say is that hitherto there have been no religious controversies with regard to secondary education in general, and that is amply borne out by the evidence given before the Secondary Education Commission. But nobody has said that it is not possible to make a religious question if it is desired to do so.

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE: I cannot honestly say that I have read the evidence, but I have read the Report of the

Secondary Education Commission, and it contains only an extremely brief reference to this subject, and one which I thought was inadequate. There is no insuperable difficulty in dealing with the matter. There is a Bill actually before the House which deals with this subject completely, so far as all these questions are concerned. I earnestly hope the Government will treat the matter on a more generous principle and attempt to deal with the difficulties with which it is faced. I hope when we come to consider the various clauses the Government will see their way to extend to some extent the operation of the Bill, so as to protect the interests of so many of their supporters.

MR. F. S. STEVENSON (Suffolk, Eye): As far as the main principle of this Bill is concerned—the establishment of a central education authority under a responsible Minister—that is surely a reform to which no serious objection can be taken. My only regret is that it should be to a great extent impaired by the fact that a great part of the Bill is in so very indefinite and hazy a form, and I am afraid that hazy atmosphere is hardly calculated to enable this measure to be steered perfectly clear of all shoals and reefs. At the same time, if anything can be done by which to avoid the more contentious questions which the noble Lord appears desirous of introducing, so much the better for what is, after all, the initial and antecedent step to the creation of local authorities and the co-ordination of the whole system of education in this country. In connection with Clause 2, the Vice-President, in his opening remarks, differed widely from what was said in another place by the Lord President of the Council, who was under the impression that the Charity Commissioners simply took over certain administrative work from the Court of Chancery. I am glad the Vice-President has corrected that, and shown that the Charity Commission has to exercise certain judicial or quasi-judicial powers; but granting that to the full, there is no reason why certain, at all events, of them should not be transferred to a Government Department. But there is one reason which would tell very strongly against the whole of the work of the Charity Commissioners being handed over to the Education Department, and that is that,

in addition to the powers which may be divided into judicial or quasi-judicial on the one hand and administrative on the other, there are distinctly two kinds of administrative work which are carried out by the Commission. There is the administrative work which is akin to that of the Education Department, partly under the Endowed Schools Acts, and partly under the Charitable Trusts Acts, and there is also the administrative work which is not in any way akin to that of the Education Department, but far more akin to that of the Local Government Board; and if the Charity Commission were merged wholly and entirely in the Education Department the latter body would have foisted upon it work which would be altogether alien to the objects and ends for which that Department was constituted. The way in which the powers are to be transferred is incorporated in the Bill in a very vague and indefinite manner. The provision set forth in the second part of Clause 2 imposes upon the Charity Commissioners a very difficult and laborious task, namely, to distinguish between what is religious and what is non-religious. Here you have a difficulty which appears to me to be as great as to distinguish between what is educational and what is non-educational, because, in many cases the two are absolutely intermixed, and so closely interwoven that it is quite impossible to separate them. Under this Bill the Charity Commissioners are to do that work. Are they to proceed by scheme? Will it be necessary, in every case in which the sum of £200 is allotted in part for educational purposes and in part for non-educational, to frame a new scheme to sever the two, and to go through all the stages which by law have to be passed through in order that a scheme may pass into law and have administrative effect? If so, it will be the work of years, involving an enormous expenditure of time, and probably the results will not be very satisfactory. If there is a more expeditious mode of producing that distinction, it ought to be incorporated into this measure. Clause 2 is evidently the most contentious part of the measure, and it is very doubtful whether that severance can, indeed, be produced between what is educational and what is non-educational. At the same time, I entirely agree in principle that the educational work of the Commission ought to be carried over

to the Education Department. As far as the Endowed Schools Acts are concerned, there can be no doubt on the subject. At the present time there is actually no Commissioner under the Acts on the Charity Commission, so that obviously there can be no work being done under the Endowed Schools Acts, and as soon as those powers are transferred to the Education Department it will be possible for something to be done in that respect. With regard to the Consultative Committee, the object of this Bill is to establish a responsible Minister of Education, and that Minister takes the shape of a President of the Board of Education rather than that of a Secretary of State, which is perhaps rather a matter of form than of principle. As to his responsibility, there may be some very serious objections urged in regard to the position which he may occupy in respect to this Consultative Committee. We know that in the present and previous sessions the Vice-President of the Council has come down to this House and put forward the existence of the Council of Education as a cloak for proposals which he has been obliged to bring before the House, and has sheltered himself to some extent behind the authority of that Council. If the Vice-President can do that now, will it not be possible for the Minister for Education to shift his responsibility to this Consultative Committee? There will be a dual responsibility, and it is not at all clear how that dual responsibility will work out. The Committee are only to speak when they are spoken to, and only to give advice when they are asked for it. On what subjects that advice is to be asked, and to what extent it is to be treated as binding by this House and in the declarations of the Minister, is not expressed in the Bill, and is obviously open to great diversity of interpretation. Then as to the form of the Consultative Committee. There are certain groups of questions that vary from year to year, which are more likely to be of importance from an educational point of view in one year than they are a few years after. If therefore you have a stereotyped body which does not change in its constitution, it is possible that the condition of affairs may be so altered that those who have been able to give very good advice on matters affecting, say, science may not perhaps be able to give equally good

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advice with regard to matters affecting, say, language and other questions which may come before them. Our only refuge is in the individual responsibility of the Minister of Education. Let him take his advice from the best possible quarters; let him vary the sources to which he goes; but it would be a very great mistake to have this body consisting of members who cannot be changed. It seems to me that the two portions to which I have referred are open to serious controversy, and there are points of detail which will have to be discussed at a later stage; but nevertheless I earnestly hope that the principal portion of the measure may be passed into law this session—that is, that portion which establishes a central Board of Education and a responsible Minister of Education.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): We have had three criticisms of the Bill now before the House. With regard to the one put forward that the Minister of Education would shelter himself behind the Consultative Committee, I do not think there is any more fear of that than of the Secretary for India, in matters concerning India, coming down here and saying that his Council would not agree to his ideas. As to the criticism of the constitution of the Committee, there would be very few men found to serve on it unless their position were likely to last some time.

MR. F. S. STEVENSON: I did not suggest that the Consultative Committee should be changed when they did not agree with the Minister. I suggested that it should not be a constant and unchanging body, because different questions might come to the front in different years, and those who spoke with authority on one question might not necessarily speak with the same authority on another question.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD: I regret very much the line taken by the Member for Rochester. When we come to discuss the question of local authorities it will be time enough to enter upon the question he has raised, which must be a thorny and difficult one, and one which will raise controversy. I should have hoped the noble Lord would have approached the question with a broader mind, and that it would have been possible on this occasion to get away from the religious difficulty. If this Bill passes it will be found that many of

the difficulties which are feared will be smoothed away, and I hope we may enter upon a course of uninterrupted smoothness, not only for secondary education, but for all education. I am deeply imbued with the belief that if we take this first step in the organisation of our education we shall have already begun a great work. But if we do not take it, not only shall we not keep abreast of other nations, but we shall lag behind. On the question of education the House is apt to leave itself too entirely in the hands of experts. Experts are all very well in their way, and they certainly have their uses. But here we have a question which interests every single man, woman, and child throughout the Empire. It seems as if we were afraid to speak of educational matters in this House. The Bill concerns individual parents, because they have a right to demand at the present time a sufficient number of schools, public as well as private, easily accessible, and not, as at present, existing in large numbers in one part of the country, and altogether absent from another. These schools ought to be at a reasonable fee, and have a course of study planned out in such a way as to make it easy for parents to understand the course of study through which their children will be put. These schools must be properly linked by curriculum to the other schools of the national system; and above all the parents have a right to demand that the schools, few or many, shall be efficient. "Sire," said the French Senator to Napoleon I., "the desire for perfection is one of the worst maladies that can afflict the human mind." We must not expect perfection, but we must not pitch the standard of expectancy too low. It concerns every class in the community, who have a right to demand that when their boys and girls grow up they shall be able not only to maintain their position in their class, but to improve on it. We must remember that in these days, when we are assuming enormous responsibilities connected with the continual increase of our territories, we have not only the duty of conquering and protecting, but the still greater duty of educating those whom we conquer and protect. And the young men whom we send out to these countries to rule and assist in ruling our dependencies should be the best educated men whom the world can produce. We must not only keep abreast with, but excel others. I believe

that, when other achievements of this Government are forgotten, this commencement of the organisation of a new system of secondary education will be looked upon as one of the best Acts passed by this Parliament, and will reflect credit not only on the Government, but on hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House who have helped to pass it. I believe it is possible to disassociate this measure from Party feeling. I call the Bill a wise measure and a dignified measure. It is true it deals only with the central authority, and for that reason it has been found fault with by the hon. Member for East Northamptonshire, and the right hon. Member for South Aberdeen. I put it to these hon. Gentlemen what chance we would have of passing a Bill of this description if it dealt with both the central authority and the local authorities. We have already seen this evening the possibility of opposition. If it had been brought in next year, we would have been nearer a General Election, and we would have discussed the local authorities with that warmth which I believe is the greatest enemy to education at the present time; and in trying for both we should probably have lost both. The foundation on which we have to place this very tall and heavy edifice of education must be broad based, and therefore we must establish a sound foundation first, and afterwards raise the superstructure. Another difficulty as regards the creation of local authorities now is that there is no agreement at the present time between the county burghs and the non-county burghs, and the ground for that will be well paved by this Bill. Now, first of all the Bill provides for a Minister of Education. If it did nothing more, it would be an extremely valuable measure for creating, for the first time, a Minister who is responsible for the education of the country. Then it unites the Education Department with the Science and Art Department, and it provides for the taking over of the educational side of the Charity Commissioners by Order in Council. This is a provision which seems to have excited the fears of the noble Lord the Member for Rochester, but I believe there are safeguards in the Bill which will prevent the allocation of moneys to secondary education which were meant for religious purposes. At the end of Clause 2 it is provided:

"That any question as to whether an endow-

ment, or any part of an endowment, is held for, or ought to be applied to, educational purposes, shall be determined by the Charity Commission, as at the present time."

Well, this allocation of the educational side of the Charity Commission will avoid waste and friction and divided counsels. I agree that the duties of the new Minister will be very heavy, but the present Vice-President is not likely to shirk them. The Bill has safeguards which I believe will ensure its successful administration. The great public schools were consulted, and have expressed their willingness, with one exception, to come under its provisions, provided that the system of university supervision to be set up is parallel and equivalent to the inspection conducted by the State. It is, therefore, necessary that the first inspectors chosen should be men of the very highest possible position, and should be equal to the very best that the universities possess. They ought to be men of wisdom, tact, experience, and kindly sympathy; and their appointment will fix the plane, but not the extent, on which the work will be undertaken. Then we have the Consultative Committee which has been so much criticised by hon. Gentlemen. This is an extremely important part of the Bill, and it is viewed as such by all the teaching profession. Some hon. Members wanted to know what would be the use of a Consultative Committee. I think it is very apparent. It will be a means of ascertaining and focussing educational opinion on many difficult matters. But its methods should be diplomatic, methods of gentle suasion, and not of coercion. It will encourage experiments, prevent stagnation, register results, and pave the way for a satisfactory way of dealing with the local authorities. Lastly, this is a dignified measure, because it deals with all schools, without distinction or disqualification, and recognises that what the public ask for is some official and intelligible certificate of efficiency. At the present time a parent has no guarantee as to whether the school he wishes to send his son to is a good school; there is no intellectual test, no sanitary test, and there is no guarantee that the teachers can teach. All these the Bill provides for now or in due course. Inspection is optional for all, and rightly so, but if the best schools accept it, and we know that they will, it will very soon be a stigma for any

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school to remain uninspected. Further, to this Consultative Committee is entrusted the registration of teachers. Thus in time the public will possess a guarantee not only of the efficiency of the schools, but of the efficiency of the teachers. Further, this is a conciliatory measure. It paves the way to deal successfully with the creation of local authorities, and a pacific settlement of the religious difficulty. It is a Bill of potentiality in the sense used by Dr. Johnson, who, when he sold the brewing business of Mr. Thrale, said "We are not selling a parcel of tubs and vats; we are selling the potentiality of growing rich beyond the dreams of avarice."

*MR. HOBHOUSE (Somersetshire, E.) : I am afraid I cannot take quite such a roseate view of the Bill as my hon. and gallant friend who has just sat down; but I can say that it is a great relief and satisfaction to those who take an active interest in education, and have been trying for many years to get legislation on the subject, that the Government have now taken up the question in earnest. It is now nearly four years since the reform of secondary education was dealt with by a Royal Commission. Most of the conclusions arrived at by the Royal Commission have been acceptable to the profession and to the majority of local authorities, and it is rather a matter of surprise that the Government have not dealt with the question seriously before now. We all remember the Bill of 1896, which I would call a hasty and false start. The Government, no doubt, dealt with some of the questions touched upon by the Royal Commission, but they mixed up with them in their Bill all the controversial topics which rage in regard to elementary education. They have shown much greater discretion in the present Bill, by proposing to begin with organisation at the top, rather than at the bottom. The first part of the Bill professes to give us a really responsible Minister of Education which the House so earnestly desires. We shall, I trust, have no longer a divided responsibility on the matter of education, but have a Minister who can grapple with the matter as a whole. It is proposed to amalgamate the several Departments, but I presume that amalgamation will not be an absolutely complete one. I imagine what is in-

tended is to have one Department, one Secretary, and a certain number of Sub-Departments somewhat analogous to the Board of Trade. I think the elementary education of the country can hardly be at first administered on very different lines from what it is at present. As regards secondary education, what is wanted is the careful preservation of the freedom and elasticity so often spoken about. We also desire to have some guidance and more judicious supervision of the whole field of secondary education than we have hitherto had. In order to combine these two policies I trust we shall have in charge of secondary education a man of large grasp—not a doctrinaire, not a man of the type of the ordinary schoolmaster, but a man who will be able to take a large view of the field of local administration as well as school management and school teaching. The question of the separation of secondary from technical education deserves further inquiry by the Departmental Committee to be appointed. There are many institutions where technical education is entirely covered by secondary education, but there are other schools which are purely technical, and which should be treated on different lines from secondary schools. The Agricultural Department is not mentioned in the Bill, but it has the distribution of a considerable sum of money, and the power to send inspectors to inspect certain kinds of teaching given in the schools. I hope that we shall have some assurance that part of the new policy will be to bring the educational side of the Agricultural Department more closely in contact and co-operation with the other educational departments. As to the Charity Commission, I think this Bill is wise in avoiding the difficulties raised in last year's measure. The difficulties of dealing with the problem of dividing the functions of the Charity Commissioners are very great, and I cannot take the sanguine view adopted by some hon. Members. The noble Lord the Member for Rochester apprehends great danger from the amalgamation of the Charity Commission with the Education Department. I myself believe that his alarm is unnecessary, as no Minister will go any further in converting charity endowments to educational purposes than the Charity Commission have already done. I think the way in which some charity schemes have been rejected after twelve

o'clock by this House, and without the Government of the day raising a hand in support of them, is something of a scandal. I believe the responsibility for all these schemes should lie with the responsible Minister at the head of the Department. These administrative schemes should be referred for inquiry to Committees, the same as Provisional Orders, and finally decided upon by this House. Under this Bill there will be transferred to the Education Department the inspection of the schools now vested in the Charity Commission, and therefore we shall do away with the absurdity of a double inspection, which is a great waste of time and public money. I confess I would like to ask a few questions on the subject of inspection. The intentions of the Government do not seem to me quite clear. I do not think they have made up their minds as to whether inspection should be central inspection, or local inspection, or central inspection paid for by the local authorities. The Government evidently propose to employ the university bodies for the purposes of inspection. But why should the universities have a monopoly of this kind? Such a body as the City of London Guild and some of the county councils could provide men who would be very useful and suitable as inspectors. I consider the proposed appointment of a Consultative Committee is eminently wise, both for the schools and for the teachers, and it will probably work well. Surely we need not be alarmed about advising. Departmental Committees are appointed every day to advise Ministers, and the Minister can take the advice offered him or not, as he thinks fit. A great deal has been said about the omission of the difficult problem of local authorities. I wish to warn the Vice-President that mere delay will not solve this question. On the contrary, the difficulties will increase. For instance, we have seen quite recently in London a new difficulty cropping up owing to the greater zeal and activity of the London School Board. Therefore the question will have to be grappled with sooner or later. I agree that it cannot be grappled with in this Bill, but sooner or later we must face this question, and necessarily cut this Gordian knot by enactments made by this House. If we are to have legislation on this subject, we must, as far as possible, observe two conditions. We must banish the jealousies

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of the different local authorities and have regard only to the interests of education, and we must, as far as possible, avoid unnecessary denominational controversy. It was pointed out before the Royal Commission that this controversy did not exist to any large extent in the case of secondary schools, and I would refer to Dr. Temple's evidence on the subject. I do not say that this difficulty is wholly non-existent, but do not let us do anything to exaggerate it or to anticipate the evils which may arise. I wish to support this Bill most heartily on the understanding that next session we shall have some further measure on the more difficult parts of this controversial question. I understand that the date put into this Bill does not in any way pledge the Government not to introduce legislation in the early part of next session, and if they can only follow up this measure by a measure dealing with local authorities also, then the reorganisation of secondary education may be one of the most important and beneficial portions of Unionist legislation.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT: I desire to thank the Government and the Vice-President of the Council, on behalf of the Chambers of Commerce and commercial classes, for the introduction of this Bill. Some differences of opinion have arisen upon its introduction, and the speeches in which they were raised have been brief and to the point. Some of us feel great confidence in the work of the right hon. Gentleman, and thank him for what is done in the cause of education. What struck me especially in the speech of the right hon. Member for South Aberdeen was that if his advice had been taken and his views adopted the matter would have been full of controversial points, and we should not have had any Bill at all. I consider education the greatest and most urgent of all our problems, and we are behind the world in this matter. Only a century ago a great statesman in Germany said it was imperative that they should make up intellectually the loss which they had sustained materially. I think that should be a stimulus to us to do all we can for this great national object. We have already done a good deal, and we have paid a good deal for elementary education, but in secondary education we have not done very much in the way of organisation and co-ordination. We had,

until this Bill was introduced, no Minister of Education, no public inspection, no public consultative board, no royalties given except by the Science and Art Department, and few public moneys to support secondary schools, though some work has been done by municipal bodies. Yet secondary education is of the most vital importance, as it is the only way to technical education and on to commercial education.

Attention called to the fact that forty Members were not present; House counted, and, forty Members being found present,

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT: I admit that a great deal has been done in recent years for technical education, and when I hear criticisms passed upon the municipal authorities as to the way the work has been conducted, the wonder is that with such a small amount of money so much could be done, because the money was thrown to the authorities, and they were left to the task of distilling wisdom from whisky and genius from gin if they could. So much has not been done as ought to have been in the case of commercial education, and the work seems to be incomplete which gives so much to obtain a knowledge of production and which neglects that which tends to distribution. The neglect of foreign languages in a large measure contributes to the serious growth of commercial competition to which our country is subjected, and there is a tremendous amount of money which could be appropriated to that purpose, and would be better appropriated than it is at present. The great success which has attended German trade since 1843 has been attributed by many people to the support which has been given to technical and secondary education in Germany, but that is not the view of others. The thing which I desire to advocate to-night is that this Bill will place our secondary and general education in its proper position, and that is the only royal road to technical and secondary education. If we wish to follow the example set us by other countries, this is the only way it can be done. As to the Bill itself, I think, although the Bill will never do much, it will do something towards removing the difficulties in the path of progress, and that is urgently required. The authorities would derive

great advantage from central direction and control, and I think it was a wise and prudent course to introduce that in this Bill. One criticism on the Bill to-night has been as to the constitution of the new Board. What we require is a Minister of Education, and provided the Bill gives a Minister responsible to Parliament for the greatest of all subjects for administration in this country, we shall be content. May I just make one remark on Clause 3. When the Bill was in another place it stated that "the Board of Education may by its office or any university or other organisation inspect schools." As the Bill comes up to us the words "or other" are struck out. Now, although the university, no doubt, will do excellent work in this direction, I must point out that the words are not that the university must inspect the schools, but that they should be inspected through the university's organisations, which may be composed of members of the university or persons selected from elsewhere. Those persons selected would be educational experts, and I am bound to re-echo what was said by another speaker, that educational experts do not get all the respect that is claimed for them. I think they are responsible for the present condition of things in this country, and therefore I am not in favour of putting this work upon them. I think it is most undesirable that they should inspect the schools. The single point I desire to draw attention to is that I trust there will be no attempt whatever to divert the work the local authorities have been doing in regard to inspection, and placing it in other hands. Now that the municipal authorities have shown their ability in the inspection of technical education, to divert this power would be a great mistake. The university, for instance, would hardly be the authority to inspect polytechnic and other industrial institutions. When we remember that the City Guilds, the College of Preceptors, and the London and other Chambers of Commerce have been strenuously, and at considerable outlay of funds, promoting the extension of commercial education—to take all that away and place it in the hands of the universities would be a very serious mistake. In Clause 3 there is the continuance of a practice against which I must enter my very strong protest, that is, that money

payable to county boroughs may be devoted to the cost of inspection. It is a serious mistake to divide boroughs by a population line, which is arbitrary, instead of by a line which is discriminating, and without any consideration whether they have been doing good educational work or not. That is a great impediment to the progress of education in this country, and I hope that at no distant date some new arrangement, which will reduce the present friction between non-county boroughs and county boroughs, and which will give the former the proper recognition which is due to the work that they have actually done for education, will be adopted, instead of one which I believe to be seriously prejudicial to educational progress. I think the Bill as a whole will accomplish a great object, and I trust it will command, as it deserves, the support of the House.

*SIR F. S. POWELL: I feel that no friend of education would be doing his duty if he did not thank the Government in the warmest terms for the introduction of this Bill. We have waited many years for this measure, and I should feel the greatest regret if through any friction or any undue desire to extend its scope the passage of the Bill were to be for a moment in jeopardy. The Government have acted wisely in confining the measure to the setting up of a central authority. The opinion in the country on that point is entirely unanimous, but when you come to deal with the local authorities disagreement begins. This measure is in accordance with precedent. In 1871 the Local Government Board was established and took over the administration of the health laws which had been carried out partly by the old Poor Law Board, partly by the Privy Council, and partly by other authorities. From the time that central authority was established most wholesome reforms have been carried out in the whole province of our sanitary and Poor Law administration. Subsequently the Board of Agriculture was established, and while before there had been confusion, embarrassment, conflict, and absence of progress, there has since been advance, and everyone interested in agriculture is grateful for the establishment of the Board. There has also been the same progress and absence of friction in every department of its work since the estab-

lishment of the Secretariat for Scotland. When the Minister of Education is once in his place and has the opportunity of examining the whole educational field many of the difficulties and embarrassments which now afflict us will disappear, and there will be the same progress in education that there has been in other departments of administration. Allusion has been made to Manchester in reference to overlapping which takes place. In Manchester the School Board, the authority which deals with technical education, and the Victoria University are all working together, and there is a complete ladder from the humblest elementary school to the Victoria University itself; and a similar result may be achieved in other towns if like energy and wisdom is displayed. The recommendation to have an Education Minister is not made now for the first time, but has been made by successive Commissions and Committees, the last of which was the Committee of last year, which dealt with museums at South Kensington and elsewhere. Reference has been made to the Charity Commission. I have the greatest regard for the work done by that body, and have no hesitation in speaking of it in the warmest terms of commendation. In many cases that work is of a judicial character, but such work is subject to review by the courts of law. No doubt hardship is inflicted upon some schools by the operation of the Charity Commission, but that operation is not voluntary, it is forced upon them by the Statute, and I should rejoice to see some modification of the Act of 1869. The law in this respect should be the same in England as it is in Scotland. At the same time I believe the Commissioners have done right and have acted in accordance with law; and if Parliament has rejected the schemes presented by the Commissioners the only result has been that those schools have remained entirely unreformed, all the evils have continued, and in many cases a great wrong has been inflicted upon the community. There is much ground for separating the charity work of the Commission from the educational work. Education is a subject which requires greater flexibility than mere charitable endowments. There is a growth in education, a rising of new wants and a continual development, which cannot attach to the ordinary charity where you are dealing with blankets or food. I

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admit there would be great difficulties in such a division of functions, and one of the many which must arise would be with regard to the sale and purchase of land. About such a point it would be impossible to decide without very careful and full consideration. Registration of teachers is also not a new subject, as it was the recommendation of a Committee some years ago. No one ought to be entrusted with the education of youth in secondary schools, any more than in elementary schools, who has not undergone and has had the advantage of a technical training. Mr. Acland was strongly of opinion that no one ought to be a teacher in an endowed school who was not so qualified, and I think there is great justice in that view. There has been some confusion between inspection and examination. Inspection, as defined in this Bill, is one thing, and examination is another. The Charity Commissioners have lately introduced into many schemes a clause by virtue of which the school is compelled to submit to examination. That means a careful examination of each individual student by such an authority as the Oxford and Cambridge Examining Board. But the inspection mentioned in this Bill is of quite a different character. It relates to the character of the teaching, the safety of the buildings as regards health, and the qualifications of the teaching staff; and such an inspection ought to be made of every school. No group of gentlemen can have a heavier responsibility than that for the health of 200 or 300 boys who are entrusted to their charge; and great advantage would accrue from the Government pointing out any defects in the arrangements of the school by which the health of the scholars was affected. As to the Consultative Committee, the only difference between it and the Council recommended by the Secondary Education Commissioners is that the latter mentions a term of office. It would be a wise amendment of the Bill to lay it down that no one should hold office on the committee for more than a certain number of years, there being power to reappoint where desirable. Five years is a very convenient period, as it gives the officer an opportunity to learn his work and to give the benefit of his experience to the school. It is clear that the Government is not bound to act on the recommendation of the Committee, whose function is rather to convey information than to direct. The idea

is really that recommended by the Museums Committee last year. It is a wise policy that the Consultative Committee should consist partly of educationalists and partly of those who are not strictly educationalists. In all these matters there ought to be an intimate connection between the purely educational expert and the man of the world. The former is too apt to live by himself in his own library, and it is desirable that he should have the assistance of men moving in society who know the wants of the community and the needs of the population. I sincerely trust that this Bill will become law this session, as we have already delayed too long. It is miserable to read reports of education in other countries and to find how far behind we are. Let us take this step in advance, and constitute a powerful and experienced central authority. I believe that then all other difficulties will fade away, and that the common desire to advance education will prevail, become dominant, and overrule all obstacles, and that we shall have in the course of a year or two a system of education in this country of which every Englishman and every Welshman will be proud.

MR. C. P. SCOTT (Lancashire, Leigh) : I hope the Vice-President will give us a little more light upon the constitution of this new Board. This is the central point of the Bill, and yet it is the point upon which the Vice-President has given us the least information. He has told us nothing of the reasons why we should have a board rather than a different organisation, and certainly the reason given in another place was not a very convincing one. We do not want any more sham boards. We have suffered quite sufficiently by one phantom Board without establishing another. We have heard again and again of the Committee of Council for Education, which is brought out when some screen is required behind which the Vice-President can take refuge for the responsibility which is not, but which ought to be, his own. This Bill is demanded because at present there are at least three bodies doing parts of the work which would be better done by one authority. It is also required because the Education Department itself is not properly organised. There are, indeed, two Education Ministers, but we do not know

which has authority and which has not. The one is the working head of the Department, apparently without power, the other has power but does not work the Department. The one has knowledge and no responsibility ; the other has responsibility and no knowledge. It is not a satisfactory state of things to have a Department spending £10,000,000 a year, and having charge of the greatest functions of Government, and not to know who we are to regard as the chief of this great engine of State. What arrangements is this Bill going to make ? There is to be a President and also a Parliamentary Secretary ; and there is besides, this phantom Board. Is this Board to be absolutely a phantom or is it not ? Is it to do nothing whatever or is it to do something ? If it is to do something, what is it to do ? There are other phantom Boards already in existence. There is the Board of Agriculture, the Board of Trade, and the Local Government Board. None of these Boards ever meet, and they are practically of no use whatever. The Committee of Council for Education does meet sometimes, and on more than one occasion it has been consulted, and, presumably, the Committee has counted for something in the consultation. As the Bill provides that the Board of Education shall take a place in educational government, presumably the powers of the Committee of the Privy Council will be transferred to the new Board, and it is conceivable, therefore, that this Board will meet and discharge certain important functions on critical occasions. It will not meet often, but it will meet sometimes, and on the occasions it does meet it will count for something. I think we ought to know whether that will be the case, or whether the Board will be absolutely of no use whatever, and is to be simply a sham. Then, I think we ought to know what is to be the position of the President of the new Board. At present the Lord President of the Council is the President of the Committee of Council for Education. He is a great officer of the State, holding a very dignified position, and he invariably is a Peer, and therefore cannot sit in this House. That does not matter when, as happened when the last Government was in power, the Vice-President of the Council is the real head of the Department, and the President is nothing at all. But what exists at the

present day is not so satisfactory, and I wish to know whether the President of the new Board is to sit in this House invariably or whether he is to sit in the other House. The Bill expressly provides that the Lord President of the Council may be the President of the Board. In that case he must be a Peer by rule or practice, and he cannot sit in the House of Commons, and therefore we shall have here only an Under Secretary. That would not be a satisfactory arrangement, and the existing arrangement is more satisfactory, because we have a working head in this House, and the only fault we have to find is that he has not the power and responsibility which he ought to have. The Lord President of the Council, who may be President of the new Board, has, apart from this Bill, important educational functions to perform, such as the granting of charters to new universities, and there will be a certain temptation to put into the hands of the Lord President all of our educational functions, so that the whole educational work of the country may be concentrated in one man. We shall strongly object to the House of Commons being deprived of the control it now has. I hope the Vice-President will relieve our anxieties on that subject. As regards the registration of teachers, the Vice-President appears to imply that the register is to be exclusively for secondary teachers.

SIR J. GORST: No.

MR. C. P. SCOTT: I hope that is not true, and that the register will include elementary teachers as well. There seems to be no reason why we should not have different classes in the register. It seems to be a matter of vital importance that the whole of the education staff of the country shall, as far as possible, be brought under registration, and I am glad that the Vice-President has now indicated that that is likely to be the case.

*MR. EVELYN CECIL (Herts, Hertford): I rise to give the Bill my general support, and I am all the more glad to do so because I think it is certainly the beginning of a solution of numerous problems connected with this very important subject, which have been waiting for a solution too long. I trust that in setting the ball rolling, both in regard to the question of overlapping

Mr. C. P. Scott.

in various districts by various authorities, and in regard to the registration of teachers and the institution of a Consultative Committee, the Bill will be beginning a very useful work, and as such I shall heartily support the Second Reading. But I do regret a little, notwithstanding the reason that has been given, that its date of commencement is put off until 1st April 1900. It is important that a supplementary measure should follow this Bill, and though I have no doubt that the Government in no sense adopted 1st April because of its tricky and delusive associations, I trust that the reputation of 1st April in this respect will be belied, and that next session will see the introduction of a supplementary measure. The portion of the Bill as to which I have the greatest doubt is the clause dealing with Charity Commissioners. My hon. friend the Member for Thirsk, though he expressly said that he was not speaking as a Charity Commissioner, was exceedingly ready to abrogate and give up the functions of the Charity Commission as regards matters which are to be referred to the Committee, and I think it is a pity that the Charity Commission should be dealt with in that way. Of course it would be possible that the Charity Commission should be dealt with wholesale and transferred to the new Board of Education, but, on the other hand, I am very well satisfied as a whole with what the Charity Commission has done. It is at present decidedly an impartial body, and its decisions in general, not merely as regards England, but under the Welsh Intermediate Education Act, have been very widely received with satisfaction. If, on the other hand, you are going to transfer these powers to the new Board of Education, you are running the risk, no matter which Government may be in power, of handing over those powers to an authority which has some Party bias. Under these circumstances, I repeat that I have a doubt whether it is altogether desirable to transfer the powers of the Charity Commission. But there is another omission in this Bill on which I should like to touch, and that is the entire absence in the Bill of any definition or indication of what is to be treated as primary education and what is to be treated as secondary. This is one of the fundamental questions which has to be decided, and without which we cannot properly deal with the secondary educa-

tion problem, and I think it would be much more satisfactory if this new Board of Education had some indication of the principles upon which it was to go in treating primary and secondary education. The policy of administration so far as regards this Board is a leap in the dark, and it is impossible to say in what direction the Committee might, under the present proposal, think it its duty to work. Everybody, I think, admits that the transition between primary and secondary education ought to be made easy; but at the same time the fact that there is a transition ought not to be lost sight of. All of us will no doubt agree that the secret of good secondary education is a good foundation of primary education, but that is no reason to my mind for cramming secondary education into primary schools, to the detriment of both. It is in that respect that I should like this new Board of Education to exercise a very careful supervision. For myself, it seems to me that the connection between primary and secondary education ought to be the Board of Education. That should be the connecting link between the primary and secondary local authorities. I cannot help feeling strongly that the whole of the two sets of education are essentially distinct. The methods of the two are distinct, and the inspectors who inspect the two separate schools ought, in my opinion, to be distinct. The subjects which are taught are essentially distinct. There is, as one speaker pointed out, more elasticity to be practised in secondary educational subjects than in primary, and, both for the benefit of primary education and secondary education, I should much prefer to see two sets of authorities established locally to deal in the first place with primary education and in the second with secondary education, and the connecting link between these local sets of authorities the new Board of Education. There is another question which I should like to see more specifically dealt with in this Bill, or referred to in the speech of my right hon. friend who introduced it, and that is the question whether secondary education ought to be entirely free. It is a question which very materially concerns the administration of this new Board, and until it is more or less settled I think we shall be groping about in the dark with reference to the management of our

secondary schools. I do not know what precisely is likely to be the policy of the new Board, but one has to remember that this question of free administration of secondary education is every day becoming more and more pressing. According to one very competent authority engaged very directly with London evening continuation schools, some 90 per cent. of the attendances are merely for pleasure. They are for the purpose of attending magic lantern entertainments or something of that kind, and the attendances drop off as soon as the humour takes the scholar. Ten shillings in the pound, I am informed, is really wasted, and I am also inclined to think with regard to these evening schools that there are far too many subjects taught. There is the danger of turning our people, who have dabbled in a number of subjects and are not very competent in any one of them, into jacks of all trades and not masters of any. That is not a very satisfactory result, but it is a result which can largely be avoided by supervision. Scholarships are, to my mind, the secret of the solution of many problems connected with secondary education. By them there is every means of finding out boys or girls with a genius for any particular subject and enabling them to pursue that particular subject for which they have a genius, and to pursue it free. This is a most estimable and desirable aim for every educational enthusiast, and I should have welcomed any scheme of that kind, a scheme such as is largely set up by the Technical Education Board in London, if it could be spread more widely throughout the country through the means of the supervision of the new Board. The object of scholarships, no doubt, is to find the right man for the right place. But my doubt is whether there are always right places enough to put the right men in. We must do our best to make sure that so far as we can there shall be. If the new Board can work out these problems I think it would do a great good to the community; but at the same time I do not believe that we can work them out unless we very rapidly proceed with a further Bill to establish local authorities. Should the result of this Debate be to ensure that the Government will bring in such a Bill next year its value will be considerable, and for my part I shall all the more heartily sup-

port the Second Reading of the present Bill.

***LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE** (Wiltshire, Cricklade): I think that we shall all agree that this Debate has been a very interesting one. A great number of important points have been raised during the discussion, and probably other points will be raised as the discussion proceeds. But I find that we are placed in rather a peculiar position in regard to many of these points, and I think that the feeling and desire of the House is that the Vice-President of the Council should be in a position to give some reply in the course of this Debate. But owing to the rules and practice of this House the Vice-President has no right to reply, and will not be able to again address the House. That, I think, is extremely inconvenient, because, as I have said, a very great number of points have been raised which certainly require elucidation and reply. I therefore propose to conclude the observations which I shall with the permission of the House make by proposing a motion, for purely formal reasons, that this Bill be read this day six months. This will necessitate a further question being put from the Chair, and give the Vice-President the opportunity of replying which I have no doubt he desires. Before I touch upon the points raised I would ask the permission of the Vice-President to offer him my humble congratulations upon being the Minister to put forward a proposal to terminate a controversy which has been carried on for a great number of years—namely, as to whether there is to be or not in this country one Minister—a Minister of Education—responsible for the whole education of the people. I can recollect this question being raised over and over again in this House, especially by one, I think, this House will always bear in honour—I mean Lord Playfair, who was for many years a Member. It has been very truly asked why we are to have a Board of Education instead of a Minister of Education. My hon. friend the Member for Leigh (Mr. Scott) has pointed out with, I think, unanswerable force many objections to inventing another Board. My opinion in regard to these Boards is very much the feeling of Oliver Twist in regard to the Bench. We know perfectly well that there is no such thing as a Board any more than there was such a thing

as a Bench in his case. We are told that if it is our good fortune to be summoned before the Board, we will find behind it the Lord President, the First Commissioner of Her Majesty's Treasury, the Chancellor of the Exchequer; and we may also find the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Lord Chancellor, but we know perfectly well not one of them will be there. My right hon. friend the Member for South Aberdeen criticised the right hon. Gentleman the Vice-President of the Council for having attempted to minimise the importance of the Bill, and for having adopted a rather depressed and lugubrious tone in addressing the House. But by Sub-section 2 of Clause 1 and the next sub-section the Vice-President comes forward to abolish his own office, and therefore it is not to be expected the Vice-President should glory too much in being the last of the Vice-Presidents. I think I may venture to pay him a tribute of respect; and that, so far as we are concerned on this side of the House, we shall not look back with regret to many of the utterances of the last Vice-President of the Council, and if he had adopted a more solemn tone in regard to it we should not be inclined to criticise it. I wish to put in a *caveat* to what fell from my hon. friend the Member for Leigh, who assumed that the Lord President must be a member of the other House. The Lord President can be, and has been a Member of this House, and it is a right that we should not allow to pass away from us. Lord John Russell held the office of President of the Council when he sat in this House. Passing from that aspect of the question, I would ask the Vice-President of the Council when he replies to try and give us some little assistance as to what the distribution of the work is to be between the Education Department and the Charity Commission. I am not disposed to attack the Vice-President himself on the vagueness of the drafting of this clause. That is the great fault of all Parliamentary Bill drafting. But I would ask any hon. Member of this House to imagine a court of law having to construe such words as, "The Order may transfer or make exercisable by the Board of Education any of the powers of the Charity Commissioners in matters appearing to Her Majesty to relate to education, and the Order may make such provision as appears necessary for applying

Mr. Evelyn Cecil.

to the exercise of those powers by the Board of Education the enactments relating to the Charity Commissioners." Why, there are forty or fifty Acts of Parliament dealing with these questions, and it seems to me that the clause opens up an indefinite vista of litigation. And for this reason: Supposing an Order is made by the Education Office in regard to a charity, partly educational and partly eleemosynary, and that that Order is sent to parties in the local district affected by that Order, naturally the first step they would take would be to dispute the jurisdiction of the Education Department, and it would require a decision of a court of law to settle the point. As to the question of inspection, although it may be a desirable thing to keep the inspection of secondary schools in the hands of the Education Office, and of university bodies, county council and other committees ought not, even by implication, to be deprived of those powers which they have exercised with such excellent results to schools to which they have given pecuniary grants. I would advise the right hon. Gentleman to introduce words into the clause to safeguard the interests of the county councils who have voted money to these institutions. This brings me to a point as to which a great variety of opinion has been expressed, in regard to the action of the Education Office in connection with Clause 7. I am inclined to think that the action of the Vice-President has worked for good, but we should reserve our right to ask whether the Education Office has exceeded its legal right. I think the County Council Education Committees have done good work. These County Committees are, after all, the representatives of the people, and where they have co-opted members from the outside, these are the very persons who would under a representative system be elected on these committees, such as the leading members of the school boards. I certainly hope that the large school boards of the country will in the future take their position on these committees as a matter of right. I would also ask the special attention of the right hon. Gentleman to a point raised by more than one speaker as to inspection. I know there are a great number of gentlemen connected with education who do not realise that inspection and examination are not the same thing. But I am not pleading for the

restoration here of the exact words struck out in another place, because if diocesan associations attain the right by law of inspecting and examining schools, or even inspecting without examining, we should at once get into a sphere of jealousy which it has been the feeling of this House if possible to avoid. One discordant note I observed with regret fell from the noble Lord the Member for Rochester. I earnestly hope that when we get into Committee we shall be animated by but one desire—to keep out of this Education Bill those difficult and thorny religious questions which have so obstructed and interfered with the progress of education. Let there be a truce at least for one year on that point, and let us pass this measure into law. If we do not do that, I am bound to say that at this late period of the session the chances of the Bill becoming an Act will be greatly interfered with. I believe it will be nothing short of a public disaster and a public scandal if we allow any considerations of that sort to stand in the way, and if we do not unite in a work which I believe will be an honour to this session. I beg to move that the Bill be read a second time this day three months.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day three months'"—(*Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

*THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): The noble Lord ended his speech with an eloquent appeal to pass the Bill, and expressed his earnest desire that this session should not pass without this measure being carried into law. I am afraid the Amendment of the noble Lord is hardly calculated to carry out the end he has in view.

*LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I only moved the Amendment as a matter of form, in order to give the Vice President the opportunity of replying.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If the reply of my right hon. friend to the various points raised were to be regarded as concluding the Debate, there might be no

objection to such a course. But, as my noble friend is perfectly well aware, such a reply might give rise, under certain circumstances, to a new Debate. Am I wrong in saying that most of the points raised by my noble friend, and by other speakers, can be more properly dealt with in Committee than at this stage? Every speaker, on both sides of the House, including the noble Lord, has blessed the Bill, and expressed a desire that the Second Reading should be carried without a Division, and agreed to as soon as may be. Under these circumstances may I venture to suggest that the House should now read the Bill a second time, and reserve to the Committee stage the reply upon the details which my right hon. friend is perfectly ready to give when that time comes. We would then be spared at present a further Debate which might in its turn lead to further discussion.

SIR H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): It is unfortunate that the right hon. Gentleman was not in the House when my noble friend began his speech. I wish to be perfectly frank with the First Lord of the Treasury. There is a feeling prevailing on both sides of the House that in a Debate of this importance the House is entitled to have some answer from the Vice-President of the Council to the variety of questions which have been raised before the Bill is read a second time. Moving that the Bill be read a second time this day three months is a course which is constantly adopted in order to give an opportunity to the Minister in charge of making explanations. We on this side of the House do not wish to prolong the Debate, and we do wish that the Bill shall be read a second time before 12 o'clock. At the same time we think that at half-past ten the time has arrived when it is due to the House that the Minister in charge of the Bill should, at all events, give some opinion on the variety of questions raised during the Debate. That is all we ask for; there is no intention of delaying the Second Reading. If that be done I will undertake that the motion of my noble friend will be immediately withdrawn.

SIR J. GORST: Upon that understanding I will try to answer the questions that have been put. I should like to premise,

Mr. A. J. Balfour.

however, that most of the questions are questions of detail, which ought to be dealt with in Committee, and many of them are questions which it would be impossible, until the Bill has come before the Committee, for even a Minister of Education to answer. In the first place, I have been asked the reason for establishing a Board of Education. As my noble friend the President of the Council has given his reasons in another place, it is rather hard for me to be asked to explain the matter. But inasmuch as there is a Board of Trade, a Local Government Board, and a Board of Agriculture, it was thought that it would be in accordance with the general desire of the House that there should be a Board of Education. I do not know that it makes a great deal of difference, but a Board will be set up with a President and a Parliamentary Secretary, instead of a Secretary of State and an Under Secretary. A great deal has been said about sham boards and paper boards, but they are potential. It is quite true that they do not often meet, but that is because the Minister in charge is in contact with his colleagues, understands the feelings of his colleagues, and has their confidence. Certainly the Committee of Council for Education has met, and I have the authority of my noble friend the Secretary of State for India, who held the office which I now hold, for saying that the Committee of Council for Education had on one occasion been called together, and had actually met and transacted business. I have been asked by the hon. Member for the Leigh Division of Lancashire who the new Minister is to be. It is rather hard to ask me such a question, seeing that the House has not yet passed the Bill, and that I am not Prime Minister.

MR. C. P. SCOTT: The right hon. Gentleman misunderstands what I said. I wanted to know what position the new President would occupy; whether he was to be a Member of this House or would sit in another place.

SIR J. GORST: That depends upon the advice to be given by the Prime Minister to Her Majesty, and I cannot foresee whether he will advise Her Majesty to appoint a Member of this House or the other House. I have been lectured for not having shown a proper sense of the great importance of this Bill; but I

would refer the right hon. Gentleman who made the criticism to a speech which he himself delivered a fortnight ago at Cambridge, in which he said that the Bill was a slender and meagre measure as regards the central authority, and an entire evasion of the most important questions connected with education. Then the right hon. Gentleman asked some questions about the transfer of the powers of the Charity Commissioners. I think the right hon. Gentleman's speech to-night, and other speeches which have been made in this House, show how extremely difficult it would be to transfer those powers which are now in the hands of the Charity Commissioners to the new Board of Education. I will tell the House how it is proposed to effect this extremely difficult operation. What are the proposals of the Bill itself? It proposes that these powers are to be transferred from time to time, and the idea of the framers of the Bill is to undertake that extremely difficult task very gradually. They will begin by transferring to the Charity Commissioners some of the powers which are most easily transferred, and which it is quite obvious that the new Board of Education might more conveniently exercise, such as the power of inspection. Such a power as that might be conveniently exercised by the new Board of Education. I desire it to be understood that it is intended to proceed, from time to time, tentatively. If I were at the present stage to attempt to tell the House how these different alterations were to be carried through, or to even attempt to explain some of the difficulties and some of the modes by which they might be surmounted, I am sure I should give rise to a Debate in this House which would cause a grave waste of legislative time. I have been asked questions with regard to the inspection, and I might point out that the provision alluded to was introduced in another place by Earl Spencer, and therefore I do not know why the noble Lord the Member for Cricklade should find fault with that Amendment.

***LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE:** I did not find fault with the Amendment. On the contrary, I approved of it, and what I said was that it would be better if certain other words were substituted.

SIR J. GORST: I am glad to hear that that is the view of the noble Lord oppo-

site. It is most important that we should employ the inspectors of county councils and bodies of that kind as well as inspectors of universities. I might point out that the people who struck those words out think we have gone too far, and some other words should be substituted. When we get into Committee on this measure I shall be glad to consider any Amendment proposed by the noble Lord opposite in order to carry out the views which he has expressed. The hon. member opposite has asked questions about the teachers' registration, but hon. members must recollect that the teachers referred to are practically registered already, and are qualified to act as teachers of higher education. This, however, is a matter which the Sub-committee will deal with when it is appointed, and it would hardly do for me, before the Sub-committee is appointed, to tie them down by any declaration stating exactly what sort of a register they will have, and what conditions they will attach to it. In the Bill as it stands this matter is purposely left at large so as to give the Sub-committee the greatest possible amount of discretion, and it would not do for me to curtail that discretion by any pledge on the part of the Government at the present moment. A general complaint has been made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Aberdeen as to the vagueness of this Bill, but that vagueness really consists in leaving a considerable amount of discretion to the Board of Education and the Consultative Committee. I really do not see how that vagueness, as the right hon. Gentleman calls it, could have been avoided, unless the Government attempted to put into the Bill a cut-and-dried scheme. Again I say that if a scheme of that kind were to be inserted in the Bill it would give rise to an amount of discussion—for there are so many difficulties connected with the matter—which would certainly make it impossible to pass this measure through the House this session. It is quite true that this Bill gives a large amount of discretion to the Board of Education, but the House will still have a hold over the question, for it will have to be done under the supervision of this House, and every Order will be laid before this House. If the House should happen to disagree with the amount of discretion given to the Board of Education as administered by

that body, it has the remedy in its own hands.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE : Under the circumstances I beg leave to withdraw my Amendment.

Amendment, by leave withdrawn.

Main Question put and agreed to ; Bill read a second time.

Motion made and Question proposed :—

"That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc."—(*Sir John Gorst.*)

MR. BRYCE : I think that this is certainly a Bill which ought to be dealt with in Committee of the whole House, for it is a measure which is not of a highly technical character. I am not aware that any Bill of this kind which concerns so many interests as this measure involves has ever before been referred to a Grand Committee. This measure deals with a great many different interests which cannot be well represented on such a Committee as the Standing Committee on Law.

SIR J. GORST : I am very much astonished at the opposition of the right hon. Gentleman, for in his own speech he admitted that this was not a Party question, and stated that he did not wish to oppose the Bill. He also said that he agreed with the principle of the Bill, and in the speeches which have been made to-night not a single hon. Member has got up and objected to the principle of the Bill. Even the noble lord the Member for Rochester did not object to the principle of the measure, although he desires to see a provision to guard certain interests which he represents put into the Bill, and he announced that if there was a Division he should vote in favour of the Second Reading of the Bill. I am, therefore, most astonished to hear the right hon. Gentleman say that this is not a technical Bill. Why, the measure bristles with technicalities, and I think everybody agrees that a Bill which is so very highly technical is in every way suited for reference to this Committee. I think if ever there was a Bill suitable for the consideration of the Standing Committee on Law it is this measure.

*MR. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.) : Since this Debate began we have had

Sir J. Gorst.

from the noble Lord the Member for Rochester and the hon. Member for Hertford some very ominous pronouncements. They agree with the principle of the Bill, but they declare their intention of putting in some very important Amendments. I think their views are not likely to be shared by a majority of the House, but may be by a majority of members of the Grand Committee, and therefore I think this Bill ought to be sent to a Committee representative of the whole House. There is also a further question of grave importance involved, and that is the selection of the President of the Board. I think it ought to be made absolutely sure in the terms of this Bill that this House should possess the President, and therefore I think this question should be considered in Committee of the whole House.

*SIR JOHN LUBBOCK (London University) : The hon Member who has just sat down has given as his first reason against referring this measure to a Grand Committee the fact that the noble Lord the Member for Rochester and the hon. Member for Hertford have declared that they will have to move important Amendments of a contentious character. The hon. Member, however, knows that the Government are most anxious to pass this Bill, and they would therefore doubtless object to the introduction of any Amendments which would have the effect of rendering it impossible to pass this Bill this session. Surely, therefore, the hon. Member may entirely relieve his mind from any fear on that score, as the Government would naturally object to the introduction of foreign matter likely to endanger the passing of the Bill. As the whole House appears to wish that the Bill should pass, I think the course which the Government propose is the one most likely to be successful. Under the circumstances, I hope my right hon. friend the Member for South Aberdeen will not press his Motion.

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE : There seems to be an impression that we shall gain a certain advantage by referring this matter to a Grand Committee, but personally it does not affect me. A great many people do not know what is intended to be done after this Bill is passed, and whether this measure is to be looked upon as the last word of the Government upon

the subject of secondary education, or whether there is going to be something to succeed it. I think it would be more satisfactory if we can have some assurance from the Government that it is intended that this measure shall be supplemented at a later period by another Bill. For my part, I shall not oppose the sending of this measure to a Grand Committee, but I do think it would be a great mitigation to the feeling of many gentlemen interested in this subject if they could be assured that there was a very definite intention on the part of Her Majesty's Government not to deal with this question in a slipshod fashion, but to really do something with the view of placing secondary education on a proper footing.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not quite know what the noble Lord means by stating that he hopes we do not intend to deal with this matter in a slipshod fashion. If he means that this Bill is not to be taken as a complete settlement of the secondary education question, I quite agree with him. This is only to be taken as an instalment of some further Bill which will place secondary education on a more satisfactory basis. I think the right hon. Gentleman opposite, the Member for South Aberdeen, was rather hasty in pressing upon the House his objection to this motion, because this measure is essentially one which ought to be sent to a Grand Committee. I think it is precisely the particular kind of Bill which would be most properly and satisfactorily dealt with by a Grand Committee. I could quite understand, if the Grand Committee was the only further opportunity which hon. Members would have of discussing the details of the measure, that they might regard its relegation to that Committee with some jealousy and doubt; but if any hon. Gentleman will look at the measure closely he will see that there are certain provisions which the House of Lords were not able to introduce, and which remain, therefore, to be introduced in Committee. If, therefore, the discussion in the Grand Committee is not satisfactory, hon. Members will have full opportunity of revising the decision of that Committee when it comes down to this House for discussion on the Report stage. Therefore I hope the House will not carry out the view suggested by my right hon. friend, but that in the interests of secondary education they will send this measure in the first place to

a Grand Committee, and then on the Report stage take it into full consideration in the presence of the Members of the whole House. If it were worth while to bring forward precedents for the course we suggest, it would be easy to do so, but I do not care to deal with that question now, because I think that the general sense and feeling of the House is that no Bill was ever more fitted to be dealt with by the Grand Committee than this measure is.

*MR. HUMPHREYS-OWEN (Montgomeryshire): If I thought that the view taken by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the London University was correct, and if I thought that the religious question raised by the noble Lord the Member for Rochester would be effectually stifled in Committee if any efforts were made to introduce it, I should be glad to see the Bill go to a Grand Committee, because there are obvious advantages in discussing such a Bill in that Committee. But if we are to have discussions on the religious difficulty as it might arise in secondary schools, I think it is of the utmost importance that such a discussion should take place in the full House, so that the country as well as every hon. Member of this House might take an interest in the proceedings, and we should know exactly where we stood in the matter. If, therefore, we can get some assurance that the burning controversial questions which we have all done our best to avoid will not be raised in Grand Committee, I should advise my right hon. friend the Member for South Aberdeen not to press the point. On the other hand, if there is a chance of these questions being raised, I think we ought to have an opportunity of fully considering them in Committee of this House.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It is not in the discretion of the Government to decide what shall or shall not be raised either in Grand Committee, in Committee of the whole House, or on the Report stage, but it is emphatically the earnest desire of the Government that these religious questions shall be excluded, as far as possible, from the discussion of this Bill.

MR. C. P. SCOTT: No serious defence for the course which has been proposed has been set up by the right hon. Gentleman, who has treated this matter in a

manner with which we are all so familiar, and he has not given a single reason in support of the reference of this measure to the Grand Committee, except one reason which eminently has no weight whatever. I think this is a matter which ought to be discussed in Committee of the whole House, and should not be left to the Report stage. I believe there is every desire on the part of hon. Members on this side of the House to see this Bill passed into law, and they do not desire that it should be unduly delayed. We have no desire to obstruct this Bill; but, on the contrary, we are anxious to help it forward in every way we can. But we do require adequate opportunities for discussion, and we do not want to be put off to the Report stage, where the discussion cannot be so effective, and where nobody can speak more than once. As the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Aberdeen has pointed out, with regard to such a question as that relating to the Charity Commission we ought to have the benefit of information from those who are competent to give an opinion of questions of this kind, which is a matter of vast public importance. It is a matter of the greatest interest, and instead of its discussion being curtailed and suppressed its consideration ought to be encouraged in every way. If the Bill were discussed in Committee of the whole House I venture to say that it would pass through very quickly, and therefore I trust this Bill will be proceeded with and discussed in the ordinary way.

LORD HUGH CECIL (Greenwich): I rise for the purpose of asking my right hon. friend the Leader of the House whether, when he says that this is not a final scheme of secondary education, he really means that the question is to be reopened during the course of the present Parliament. Probably the discussion on this Bill might very easily be shortened if it was understood that next session a more important Bill would be brought in dealing with these various questions. I think it would be necessary to discuss in the Grand Committee matters which have been raised in various parts of this House which are of great interest, and which, sooner or later, must be discussed by the only tribunal which can possibly deal with them—namely, by the House of Commons.

Mr. C. P. Scott.

*MR. CHANNING: I wish to bring before the First Lord of the Treasury one point which I understand has not been alluded to in this discussion, and that is the inconvenience which arises from the undesirable course adopted in dealing with two of the sub-clauses of the Bill appertaining to the money question, and the rating and making provision for the cost of the Department, which are withheld from the consideration of the Grand Committee. This is certainly a most irregular course to take, for it will divorce those clauses from the proposals which will go before the Committee upstairs, who will be called upon to deal with the remaining portion of the Bill. Those two matters will have to be dealt with across the floor of this House. It seems to me a most irregular and improper course to adopt, and that in itself ought to induce Her Majesty's Government to reconsider their proposal to send this Bill to a Grand Committee. It is a very irregular course, and one which is peculiarly open to objection in dealing with such a measure. The rating question will certainly raise a good deal of discussion, and it would be almost impossible for the discussion in the Committee upstairs to be carried on fairly unless the provision with regard to rating has been dealt with in the usual way in the first instance in this House in Committee of Supply.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I desire to remind the hon. Member that the sub-sections to which he refers can be dealt with in the Grand Committee. The part which cannot be dealt with there is Sub-section 2 of Clause 6, which I think it is very essential should be dealt with in Committee of the whole House.

*MR. CHANNING: These sub-sections raise the question of money, and that question alone raises a great many other questions in which money has to be voted by this House. I think the arguments which have been advanced against the course which has been proposed deserve the careful consideration of the House. It seems obvious that one or two very important questions will arise which will naturally call for expert opinion, which cannot be provided by the ordinary composition of the Grand Committee and the small number of Members who may be added to it. I hope that even now

the Government will reconsider their proposal to send this measure to a Grand Committee.

SIR W. HART DYKE (Kent, Dartford): I do not think there is any doubt that this Bill can be fully discussed in Grand Committee. It seems to me that it is ridiculous to raise all these intricate matters which must be dealt with later on as a whole, and I would not support the Second Reading of this Bill unless I believed that Her Majesty's Government could see their way to deal with this question more fully at an early date. It would place Her Majesty's Government in a very unenviable position to go out of office and leave this question without filling up the gap which this measure will leave open. With regard to the matters which have been raised they are no doubt of great importance, but they must be dealt with when legislation on the subject is completed by the addition of the local authority. When a measure is introduced for the purpose of constituting the local authority, that will be the time to raise these questions, and not when the present Bill is being referred to a Grand Committee. This Bill is one which deals purely with one portion of a great question, and that is the establishment of a properly co-ordinated central authority to deal with secondary education.

***SIR H. H. FOWLER**: If the Bill before the House assumes the shape which my right hon. friend has pointed out, I do not think there will be very much objection to it on this side of the House, or to the views which he has expressed. The House, however, has already had notice so clear and unmistakable that my right hon. friend himself has had to appeal to those who gave that notice. We have had notice that questions of the greatest gravity are to be raised in Grand Committee. Of course it is perfectly true, as my right hon. friend the Member for the University of London has pointed out, that it is very improbable that the Grand Committee will accept those views. Nevertheless there is a possibility of it. Various questions have to be discussed and settled there, and those of us who are acquainted with the strong interest which the noble Lords who have spoken have in this question know that when they make up their minds to raise a question which they think of vital im-

portance they do so. This Bill bristles with very controversial questions which will have to be settled by this House whatever the decision of the Committee may be. Now, assuming that the decision of the Committee followed the views of my right hon. friend the Member for the University of London then the noble Lords opposite would not accept it; assuming that the Committee accepted the views of the noble Lords, then I assume that Members of this House—and also the Members of the Government—would not accept that view. Therefore sooner or later these questions will have to come to this House to be decided, and as a matter of convenience it seems to me that time will be saved by having those questions settled in Committee of the whole House rather than upon the Report stage. I appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House to consider these points, because he is peculiarly sensitive about taking any step which might indicate a prolongation of this Debate. I assured the right hon. Gentleman an hour ago that if we were offered an opportunity of fully discussing one or two points at a later stage the Amendment to which he objected would be withdrawn and the Bill allowed to be read a second time. That course was agreed to, and the Bill was read a second time an hour earlier than it otherwise would have been. On this side of the House we want this Bill to pass; but we say that the settlement of these matters, which are of great importance, can best be taken in Committee of the whole House, and if that course were adopted it would be a saving of time. But there is another point which I desire to raise. The right hon. Gentleman said he would not refer to precedents, but I should like to refer to one precedent. I cannot give him the exact time, but I remember a very powerful speech made by the right hon. Gentleman opposite when he was Leader of the Opposition, in which he laid down with singular accuracy and clearness the true constitutional position of Standing Committees, namely, that they were not to be the means of a Government getting through controversial Bills without full discussion in the House, but that the Bills to be sent to Grand Committees should be bills upon the details of which vital questions could not be raised. I always thought that the views which

the right hon. Gentleman stated then were sound and statesmanlike views. There is a danger that this habit of sending Government Bills to Standing Committees will grow, and Bills of great importance may be taken from the general consideration of the House, and practically the Committee stage may be eventually abolished altogether, and we shall be thrown entirely upon these Grand Committees. Now these Grand Committees are not attended as they ought to be by the Members. I remember a Report being presented of the numbers of the Members who took part in the Grand Committees during a period of seven years, and I think there were very few divisions in which more than thirty Members recorded their votes. That is a very small Committee to deal with important questions, and even the Government have not that force in a Grand Committee which they have in the Committee of the whole House. I know that questions are sometimes settled in a haphazard way on the Grand Committee, and where there is a principle involved I think the question should be taken from that Committee and settled by a Committee of the whole House. If the right hon. Gentleman had said a Select Committee, I should have supported that, because the House would not have been deprived of its control in that case, and no doubt these technical questions which require discussion by experts would have been more effectually dealt with in a Select Committee which cannot be done in a Grand Committee. I make one more appeal to the right hon. Gentleman on this question, and I make it in the interests of the Bill and in the interest of the rapid passing of the Bill. At all events, by keeping these questions out of the Bill you avoid setting up a dangerous and tempting precedent to all Ministers, not only to use this power, but to abuse the institution of Grand Committees. I, therefore, earnestly appeal to the right hon. Gentleman not to send this Bill to the Grand Committee.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The right hon. Gentleman has laid down the rules which he thinks ought to govern the relegation of Bills to Grand Committees, and perhaps this appeal may be allowed as an excuse for my adopting the unusual practice of making a third speech. I do not want to controvert those rules, and I

do not say whether I agree with them or not. I think it is unnecessary for me to do so, for, in truth, this Bill conforms to every canon which can be laid down to govern the conduct of this House in relegating Bills to Grand Committees, and the quotation which the right hon. gentleman has made from some forgotten speech of mine supports that view. It is true that my noble friend and one or two other hon. Gentlemen in this House desire to raise questions of principle, but if the topic of religious education is introduced in Grand Committee into this Bill, then I frankly say that it is clearly impossible that this Bill can pass into law in the course of this session. I do not think it is likely that such questions will be introduced, and I do not believe that we shall find this measure burdened with this additional weight of controversy. If it is, I confess that, with such forecasts as I am able to make, we shall not have time to deal with it this session. But if the measure remains as it is now, as a measure altogether outside the limits of acute religious controversy, then surely we may hope that the labours of the Grand Committee will assist the Report stage, and the Bill will remain what it is now, a non-controversial measure as to the principles of which there is no dispute upon either side of the House, and which in the nature of things may very properly be dealt with by the Grand Committee. I venture to press very earnestly upon the House the propriety of sending the Bill up to the Grand Committee, because unless we do that the chances of this Bill becoming law this session are very faint indeed, and the result would be that the chances of dealing with the question of secondary education, of which this is only an instalment, would become fainter and fainter.

DR. CLARK (Caithness): You are sending this Bill now to a Grand Committee where 20 Members may determine any question of principle in it. There are two clauses here to which I should like to call attention. They are Sub-section 2 of Clause 3, and Sub-section 2 of Clause 6, which affect the money to be voted by Parliament. Such proposals will necessarily have to go before the Committee of Ways and Means, because you are placing a burden on the country. I wish to know if a Grand Committee can insert such sub-sections. If so our

Sir H. H. Fowler.

control of finance in this House is gone altogether. The only course that can be taken will be, after it has come to the Report stage, to again recommit the Bill so that these clauses may be considered. That being so, why should we be placed in this position? Why should one portion of this Bill go before one Committee and another portion be dealt with by another Committee? The Grand Committee has often modified clauses in Bills during the present Parliament, and when it has been proposed to modify those proposals in this House you, Mr. Speaker, have ruled that we cannot do it. Therefore, so far as those clauses are concerned, when they come back to this House we shall be unable to modify them. Anything which is done in the Grand Committee we cannot modify in this House, and the only means of doing it would be to recommit the Bill to the House for that purpose.

*MR. SPEAKER: With regard to the hon. Member's first question, I may say that as regards Sub-section 2 of Section 3 that can be dealt with by the Grand Committee because it does not involve a charge upon the revenue, and therefore need not be preceded by a resolution in Committee of the whole House in accordance with Standing Order No. 62. As regards the second point, which refers to

the second sub-section of Clause 6, it would be necessary, before the Grand Committee dealt with that sub-section, that there should be a Committee—not a Committee of Ways and Means—but what is generally called a Money Committee of this House, and a resolution put in that Committee authorising the expenditure, and that would have to be passed in Committee, and would be reported to the House. After that had been done, then the Grand Committee would be in a position to insert the clause.

DR. CLARK: Could Clauses 3 and 6 be modified in this House on the Report stage?

MR. SPEAKER: They could be modified, but the charge cannot be increased, or its incidence altered. If the hon. Member wished to increase the salary he could not do it, but he could reduce it. The procedure which I have described in regard to Sub-section 2 of Section 6 has often been followed in this House.

Question put.

The House divided: Ayes, 182; Noes 80. (Division List No. 206.)

AYES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W. (Leeds)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barry, Rt. Hon. A. H. S. (Hunts)
Barton, Dunbar Plunket
Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Beckett, Ernest William
Bamrose, Sir Henry Howe
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bethell, Commander
Bill, Charles
Blakiston-Houston, John
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex)
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn)
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, A. Montagu
Butcher, John George
Carlile, William Walter
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbys.)
Cecil, E. (Hertford, East)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)

Chamberlain, J. A. (Worc'r)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles R.
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cornwallis, Fiennes S. W.
Cotton-Jodrell, Col. E. T. D.
Cox, Irwin Edward B.
Cross, Herbert S. (Bolton)
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Curzon, Viscount
Dalbiac, Colonel Philip Hugh
Dalkeith, Earl of
Denny, Colonel
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Drage, Geoffrey
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir W. Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward

Fergusson, Rt. Hon. Sir J. (Man.)
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Firbank, Joseph Thomas
Fisher, William Hayes
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Folkestone, Viscount
Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
Garfit, William
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Rt. Hon. G. J. (St. G'rge's)
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, W. D. (Widnesbury)
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Gull, Sir Cameron
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert W.
Hardy, Laurence
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Heath, James
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Alexander
Hill, Sir Edward Stock (Bristol)
Hobhouse, Henry
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Howell, William Tudor

Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn
Hutchinson, Capt. G. W. Grice-
Jackson, Rt. Hn. Wm. Lawies
Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Kemp, George
Kenyon, James
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry
Lawrence, W. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Lea, Sir T. (Londonderry)
Lecky, Rt. Hn. William E. H.
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Llewellyn, E. H. (Somerset)
Llewellyn, Sir D. (Swansea)
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col. C. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (Liverpool)
Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
Lowe, Francis William
Lubbock, Rt. Hon. Sir John
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Lyell, Sir Leonard
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
Macdonald, John Cumming
MacIver, David (Liverpool)
Maclure, Sir John William
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
Meller, Colonel (Lancashire)
Milbank, Sir P. C. John

Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, Arthur (Londonderry)
Moore, William (Antrim, N.)
More, R. Jasper (Shropshire)
Morgan, Hon. F. (Monm'thsh.)
Morrell, Geo. Herbert
Morton, A. H. A. (Deptford)
Mount, William Geo.
Muntz, Philip A.
Myers, William H.
Newdigate, Francis Alexander
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Northcote, Hon. Sir H. S.
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
Pease, Herbert P. (Darlington)
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, R. (Lancs, Newton)
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Pollock, Harry Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Priestley, Sir W. O. (Edin.)
Purvis, Robert
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Rentoul, James Alexander
Ridley, Rt. Hn. Sir Matthew W.
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Robinson, Brooke
Rothschild, Hn. Lionel Walter
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Ryder, John Herbert Dudley
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert

Savory, Sir Joseph
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sidebottom, T. H. (Stalybr.)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Jas. Parker (Lanarks.)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Stanley, Hon. A. (Ormskirk)
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Strauss, Arthur
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ)
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Valentia, Viscount
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset))
Wilcox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson-Todd, W. H. (Yorks.)
Wolf, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, George
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir
William Walrond and Mr.
Anstruther.

NOES.

Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allison, Robert Andrew
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Austin, M.
Bainbridge, Emerson
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Billson, Alfred
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Sir Charles (Glasgow)
Carmichael, Sir T. D. Gibson-
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Clark, Dr. G. B. (Caithness-sh.)
Colville, John
Commings, Andrew
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crilly, Daniel
Dalziel, James Henry
Davitt, Michael
Dewar, Arthur
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, C. M. (Lanark)

Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir H.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert J.
Grey, Sir Edward (Berwick)
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir W.
Hayne, Rt. Hon. C. Seale-
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. C. H.
Horniman, Frederick John
Humphreys-Owen, A. C.
Johnson-Ferguson, Jabez Edw.
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cmb'land)
Leng, Sir John
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Macaleese, Daniel
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Crae, George
M'Ewan, William
M'Ghee, Richard
M'Leod, John
Maddison, Fred.
Mendl, Sigismund Ferdinand

Murnaghan, George
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Connor, J. (Wicklow, W.)
Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
Pease, Joseph A. (Northum.)
Pirie, Duncan V.
Price, Robert John
Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
Reckitt, Harold James
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Robson, William Snowdon
Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
Shaw, Charles E. (Stafford)
Smith, Samuel (Fl nt)
Souttar, Robinson
Steadman, William Charles
Strachey, Edward
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Sullivan, T. D. (Donegal, W.)
Thomas, David A. (Merthyr)
Trevelyan, Charles Phillips
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (H'ff'd.)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Mr. Scott and Mr. Yoxall.

Bill committed to the Standing Com-
mittee on Law, &c.

TELEGRAPHS (TELEPHONIC COM-
MUNICATION, &c.) BILL.

Order read for resuming Adjourned
Debate on Question (21st June), "That

the Bill be committed to the Standing
Committee on Trade, &c."

Question again proposed.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO
THE TREASURY (MR. HANBURY,

Preston): Perhaps I may be permitted to take this opportunity of stating to the House what are the arrangements that have been made with the National Telephone Company since this subject was last before the House. There are three points that have been discussed with the National Telephone Company. The first is the difficulty which has arisen with regard to certain large boroughs where the National Telephone Company have practically done away with the overhead system, and have spent considerable sums of money in establishing an underground system. This was done before there was any probability of any Bill of this kind being introduced into the House, and that money was expended although the way-leaves were granted under leases terminable on very short notice. There was a very strong fear expressed on the part of the National Telephone Company that the corporation of a borough which, under this Bill, has new powers given it to establish a telephone system of its own, might see its way under this Bill to establish a telephone monopoly of its own within its own bye-laws, give notice to the Telephone Company to terminate its way-leaves in six months, and so practically confiscate large sums of money expended in such a borough by the Telephone Company. That is, of course, something which I do not think is at all likely to occur, though, of course, if any corporation did take such a step it would be sheer confiscation, and I agree with the National Telephone Company that it should be a condition of any licence to be granted to any corporation or company in a borough where such money had been expended that these way-leaves should be practically secured to the company during the remainder of their licence. I think that only a fair step to take. In the first place, it is no great concession, because I do not think any corporation would have behaved in the way in which the National Telephone Company thought was possible, but, as a condition of so securing their way-leaves, I required that the company should come under control. One of the greatest complaints made against the company was that they were unregulated, that we had no control over their rates, either maximum or minimum, and that they were not obliged, as all other public companies were, to treat with the public at all upon equal terms. That in the future will be limited, and

the company will be prohibited from granting any preferential terms whatever.

SIR JAMES FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.): They never did.

MR. HANBURY: At any rate, that will be impossible in the future. Although my right hon. friend is right in saying that they never did, still, my right hon. friend will admit that theoretically they have that power now. The second point is this, that I realise that if we are going to induce either new companies or special corporations to embark on this work, a licence extending only to 1911 is hardly sufficient temptation to them. I think we ought to give to those new companies and corporations a substantial term of either 20 or 25 years; and if we were to do that it would be grossly unfair, I think, not to extend the National Telephone Company's licence also, subject, however, to the same restrictions and prohibition of preferential rates. Everywhere the company will cease to be a monopoly. In those limited areas where the company have already exchanges, competition will be encouraged by the Bill, and the company have undertaken to enter no new areas—that is to say, that, whereas under existing conditions they have a perfect right to compete throughout the whole of the country, in future the licence will be so limited that they will not be able to set up exchanges in any area whatever. That, of course, will be a great protection to the smaller municipalities, where there is no exchange at present, and where the National Telephone Company will be prevented under the present Bill from setting up competition. I hope the House will acknowledge that the company have treated the Government most fairly, and I trust that, now they have come to terms, the result will be a more efficient service throughout the length and breadth of the land. The House will, I hope, deal with perfect fairness by the company, now that terms have been arranged, and allow the Bill to be sent to the Standing Committee on Trade.

*MR. COHEN (Islington, E.): I believe I shall be in order if I move to omit the words "Standing Committee on Trade,"

and insert the words "Select Committee of this House." I only wish to say that my right hon. friend some time ago said he did not know how anybody could object to this proposal who had served on the Select Committee upon this question last year. Now it is precisely because I have served on that Committee that I make this motion, because the Bill before the House is diametrically opposed to the recommendations of that Committee. I should not be in order if I attempted to establish the truth—which I could do—of what I have just said; but I am in order, I think, when I ask the House to refer this Bill to a Select Committee, because, in consequence of the form which it has now assumed, it raises entirely new issues. It now affects different considerations upon which we ought to have an investigation and evidence, and we ought to have witnesses who are capable of informing us how far the proposals of the Bill will be affected by the change which it has now undergone. I am not able to argue on this motion why I make this statement, but I claim in support of my Amendment not only the vote of the right hon. Gentleman who presided over that Committee with conspicuous ability, but I also claim the support of my right hon. friends on the front bench who, by consenting to the appointment of a Joint Committee of both Houses to inquire into this dangerous growth of municipal trading, have themselves recognised that the principle is wrong. I submit, therefore, that they ought not to oppose the appointment of a Select Committee, and I beg to move.

Amendment proposed,

"To leave out the words 'the Standing Committee on Trade, &c.,' and add the words 'a Select Committee.'"—(*Mr. Cohen.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'the Standing Committee on Trade, &c.,' stand part of the Question."

**MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth):* I think it is somewhat hard upon hon. Members who, with due diligence, have endeavoured to find an opportunity on the Second Reading of this Bill to express their views that a great many of them have been prevented from doing so by circumstances over which they have no

Mr. Cohen.

control. I presume that now I am limited, as a matter of order, to discussing only the question of the Committee to which the Bill can be referred, and it is not open to us to discuss the merits of the Bill. It is more hard still that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury should have brought forward this evening more new matter which seems to shift the ground, and alters the reasons upon which the Bill was referred. In referring this Bill to the Grand Committee many of us probably will be deprived of that opportunity which we should get either in a Committee of the whole House or on a Select Committee, where we should have the right of bringing evidence upon the subject. The Bill appears to me to be a money Bill involving an expenditure of £2,000,000, and it seeks to give power to local authorities to raise money out of the rate-payers' pockets for the purpose of entering upon municipal trading.

It being after midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

BOARD OF EDUCATION (SALARIES).

Committee to consider of authorising the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of any salaries and remuneration that may become payable under any Act of the present Session to provide for the establishment of a Board of Education for England and Wales (Queen's recommendation signified), To-morrow.—(*Sir John Gorst.*)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE:—AGRICULTURAL AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION (IRELAND) BILL—TITHE RENT-CHARGE (RATES) BILL.

On the Motion for the Adjournment of the House:—

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I desire to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when he is going to take the Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Bill, for which we have waited so long. This Bill has received scurvy treatment, but it is a Bill of great importance. Although we accept its principle, I think we are en-

titled to get fair notice when the Bill is going to be taken, and we are also entitled to have a reasonable amount of time for its discussion. I mention this matter because I heard a rumour that it was the intention of the Chief Secretary for Ireland to introduce this Bill after 11 o'clock this evening. I have no hesitation in saying that to introduce it at any such hour as that would be nothing short of a public scandal. I was denounced the other day because I asked for a reasonable time for the discussion of subjects which were not Irish questions. This, however, is an Irish measure, and we should have a reasonable time allowed for its discussion, and our convenience should also be considered in setting it down for discussion. I think I have a right to complain of the way we have been treated to-night, for this measure has been set down as the second Order, after a Bill which everyone knew must have taken up nearly the whole of the evening. We have waited very patiently for this Bill to come on, and I do say that this is not the way in which a Bill of such importance ought to be treated, and it is not the way in which the Irish Members ought to be treated. I ask the right hon. Gentleman to put this Bill down as the first Order.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman opposite complains of the treatment meted out by the Government to the Irish Members. I think he has very little ground indeed for that complaint. It is perfectly true that this is an important Bill; in fact, I think it is of the greatest possible importance. It does not, however, follow from that that it is a Bill that needs to have very great discussion. It may require very great discussion or it may not, but if it does it cannot be passed in the course of the present session. That will be obvious to all hon. Members who have followed the course of business this session, and who know the amount of time left at our disposal. Last session was mainly occupied by Irish business, for the great Bill of that session was an Irish measure. This Bill of the Chief Secretary for Ireland was received—and I think is still receiving—the general approval of the Irish Members, and, if that theoretical approval is accompanied by the practical advantage of a brief discussion of its details, it might be passed

in the course of the present session, and that would be an advantage to Ireland. It is quite manifest that this advantage can only be obtained on the conditions which I have stated, and if these days of discussion which hon. Members require are indeed necessary to carry it into law I greatly fear that Ireland must wait until next session for the advantages which this Bill is intended to give to her. I can only put this Bill down on occasions when I have some hope that it may come on. If, unfortunately, this measure should be discussed at length, the alternative I have suggested is the only one which is possible, and we shall have to defer until next session this Bill which is intended to confer so many advantages upon Ireland.

SIR T. ESMONDE (Kerry, W.): I hope the right hon. Gentleman will not be under the impression that small interest is taken in this measure. I think it is a Bill of very great importance indeed, and possibly it might be for the convenience of Irish Members if the right hon. Gentleman could name some day on which he could take it.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I shall put it down for Wednesday next.

SIR T. ESMONDE: As the first Order?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot do that.

SIR T. ESMONDE: All I wish to say is that if this Bill is not passed this session there will be great disappointment in Ireland. I hope that under the circumstances the measure will not be lost through any want of effort on the part of the Government.

MR. WILLIAM MOORE (Antrim, N.): I agree that this is a very important measure, and the sooner the Government can make it convenient to put it down as the first Order the better will the Unionist Members be pleased. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will see his way at least to give us reasonable notice, so that we may attend.

CAPTAIN PIRIE (Aberdeen, N.): Will the discussion on the Tithe Rent-charge (Rates) Bill, if unfinished to-morrow, go as the first Order on Wednesday?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): When an Order has been put down as the second or third Order we never can tell when the Bill is going to come on. I do hope the right hon. Gentleman will adopt a reasonable tone in regard to this measure, for it is practically the only Irish Bill this session. All we ask is that it shall be put down as the first Order, and that we shall have reasonable notice. It contains an enormous number of details dealing with large sums of money which is principally Irish money, and I claim my right to discuss this Bill at a proper length. I am not going to be a willing party to the modern practice of discussing business under the Ten-minutes Rule or

taking Irish measures at the tail end of English or Scotch business; I would prefer that it should go over to another session rather than have an incomplete Bill this session, for we never can get Irish business in a complete form. Surely it is not asking too much of the Government to give us a reasonable share of the time of the House for one day or a portion of a day with this Bill as the first Order, when Irish Members can have an adequate discussion of their own affairs. We are asking nothing unreasonable, but after the treatment we have received we shall not be content, and the Government will save more time by being reasonable than otherwise.

MR. MURNAGHAN (Tyrone, Mid.): I should like the right hon. Gentleman to put this Bill down as the first Order on Thursday.

Adjourned at a quarter after Twelve of the clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 27th June 1899.

NEW PEER.

The Right Hon. Sir Philip Henry Wodehouse Currie, G.C.B., having been created Baron Currie of Hawley, in the County of Southampton—was (in the usual manner) introduced.

SAT FIRST.

The Lord Herschell sat first in Parliament after the death of his father.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments has laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with—

LEEDS CORPORATION.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL
(GENERAL POWERS).

MENSTONE WATER.

Also the Certificates that no Standing Orders are applicable to the following Bills :

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL
ORDERS (No. 9).LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND)
PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 4).MILITARY LANDS PROVISIONAL
ORDER.

Also the Certificates that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have not been complied with :

DERWENT VALLEY WATER.

LONDON UNITED TRAMWAYS.

And also the Certificates that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with :

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL
ORDERS (No. 4).LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL
ORDERS (GAS).

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL
ORDERS (No. 11).LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL
ORDERS (No. 12).PIER AND HARBOUR PROVISIONAL
ORDERS (No. 2).ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL
ORDERS (No. 16).LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL
ORDERS (HOUSING OF THE WORK-
ING CLASSES) (No. 2).LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL
ORDERS (No. 2).LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL
ORDERS (No. 7).LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL
ORDERS (No. 8).LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND)
PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2).LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND)
PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No 3).

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

Report from, That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the following Bills, viz. :

BEXHILL AND ROTHERFIELD
RAILWAY,BRADFORD TRAMWAYS AND IM-
PROVEMENT,

GODALMING CORPORATION WATER, ought to be dispensed with, and the Bills allowed to proceed.

Read, and agreed to.

LONDON UNITED TRAMWAYS BILL.

DERWENT VALLEY WATER BILL.

Examiner's Certificates of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Monday next.

LEITH HARBOUR AND DOCKS BILL.

SOUTH - EASTERN AND LONDON,
CHATHAM, AND DOVER RAILWAY
COMPANIES (NEW LINES) BILL.BAKER STREET AND WATERLOO
RAILWAY BILL.

BLACKPOOL IMPROVEMENT BILL.

2 B

**GREAT NORTHERN AND STRAND
RAILWAY BILL.**

LONDON IMPROVEMENTS BILL.

Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Marquess of Zetland be proposed to the House as a Member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Granard (E. Granard); read, and agreed to.

BRADFORD TRAMWAYS AND IMPROVEMENT BILL.

To be read 2^a on Monday next.

GAS ORDERS CONFIRMATION (No. 2) BILL [Lords].

House to be in Committee on Thursday next.

**BEXHILL AND ROTHERFIELD
RAILWAY BILL.**

Read 2^a, and committed.

**GODALMING CORPORATION WATER
BILL.**

Read 2^a, and committed; the Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

**DERBY CORPORATION TRAMWAYS,
&c., BILL.**

Read 2^a, and committed.

**WALKER AND WALLSEND UNION
GAS (ELECTRIC LIGHTING) BILL.**

Read 2^a.

**LOWESTOFT PROMENADE PIER BILL.
LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (MONEY)
BILL.**

Read 2^a, and committed.

**LONDON AND NORTH-WESTERN RAIL-
WAY (NEW RAILWAYS) BILL.**

**LONDON AND NORTH-WESTERN RAIL-
WAY (ADDITIONAL POWERS) BILL.**

Read 2^a, and committed; the Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

**WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
BILL.**

IONIAN BANK BILL.

Read 2^a.

**BROMPTON AND PICCADILLY CIRCUS
RAILWAY BILL.**

Read 2^a, and committed; the Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

LEEDS CORPORATION BILL.

**LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL (GENERAL
POWERS) BILL.**

MENSTONE WATER BILL.

Read 2^a.

**WOLVERHAMPTON CORPORATION
BILL [Lords].**

Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

**BELFAST AND NORTHERN COUNTIES
RAILWAY BILL.**

Read 3^a, and passed.

**SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE STIPEN-
DIARY JUSTICE BILL.**

FISHGUARD WATER AND GAS BILL.

Read 3^a, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

**COLONIAL AND FOREIGN BANKS
GUARANTEE FUND BILL [Lords].**

Returned from the Commons, agreed to, with Amendments; the said Amendments considered, and agreed to.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL
ORDER (HOUSING OF WORKING
CLASSES) BILL.**

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL
ORDERS (POOR LAW) BILL.**

Read 2^a (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the whole House.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL
ORDERS (GAS) BILL.**

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL
ORDERS (No. 2) BILL.**

Read 2^a (according to order).

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL
ORDERS (No. 5) BILL.**

Read 2^a (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the whole House.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL
ORDERS (No. 4) BILL.**

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL
ORDERS (No. 7) BILL.**

Read 2^a (according to order).

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL
ORDERS (No. 8) BILL.**

Read 2^a (according to order); and committed to a Committee of the whole House.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 9) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 11) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 12) BILL.

Read 2^a (according to order).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 1) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 3) BILL.

Read 2^a (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the whole House.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 4) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES) (No. 2) BILL.

PIER AND HARBOUR PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL.

Read 2^a (according to order).

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 7) BILL.

Read 2^a (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the whole House.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 16) BILL.

MILITARY LANDS PROVISIONAL ORDER BILL.

Read 2^a (according to order).

TRAMWAYS ORDERS CONFIRMATION (No. 2) BILL [Lords].

House in Committee (according to order); Amendments made; Standing Committee negatived; the Report of Amendments to be received on Thursday next.

TRAMWAYS ORDERS CONFIRMATION (No. 3) BILL [Lords].

House in Committee (according to order); the Amendments proposed by the Select Committee made; further Amendments made; Standing Committee negatived; the Report of Amendments to be received on Thursday next.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION (LONDON) BILL [Lords].

Returned from the Commons, agreed to; read 3^a (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 18) BILL.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 19) BILL.

PIER AND HARBOUR PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 1) BILL.

House in Committee (according to order): Bills reported without Amendment; Standing Committee negatived; and Bills to be read 3^a on Thursday next.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 5) BILL.

Read 3^a (according to order), with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 8) BILL.

Read 3^a (according to order), and passed.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 14) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1^a; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 148.)

GODALMING CORPORATION WATER BILL.

Report from the Committee of Selection that the five Lords appointed a Select Committee on the Leith Harbour and Docks Bill and other Bills do form the Select Committee for the consideration of the Godalming Corporation Water Bill; read, and agreed to; all petitions referred to the Committee, will leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bill to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bill.

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (NORTH-EASTERN DIVISION).

General Report for the year 1898, by W. P. Turnbull, Chief Inspector; presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

PETITION.

LONDON GOVERNMENT BILL.

Petition for Amendment of—of Guardians of the Poor of St. George's-in-the-East; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

SOLATION HOSPITALS (AMENDMENT) BILL [Lords].

Reported from the Standing Committee with a further Amendment. The Report of the Amendments made in Committee of the whole House, and by the Standing Committee to be received on Friday next.

FINE OR IMPRISONMENT (SCOTLAND AND IRELAND) BILL.

Reported from the Standing Committee without Amendment, and to be read 3^d on Thursday next.

LONDON GOVERNMENT BILL.

House again in Committee (according to order).

Clause 8:—

LORD WINDSOR: The object of my Amendment, which comes after Sub-section 1 of this clause, is a very simple one. It appears that the library authorities in London are under certain disabilities as compared with the library authorities throughout the country, and my desire is to put them on the same footing. In Clerkenwell the Vestry recently endeavoured to devote some of the library rate to the purposes of the general rates, but when the Local Government Board was appealed to they refused to sanction this arrangement. The object of my Amendment is to make it perfectly clear that the library authorities in London shall be allowed to spend the full amount of the rate. The latter part of my Amendment deals with any unexpended balance which may be in hand at the end of the financial year. As I understand, the library rate throughout the country cannot be altered, but in London it can be reduced in the following year when there is an unexpended balance in hand in respect of the preceding year. The only practical effect of this seems to be that the library authorities spend the balance hurriedly, so that they shall not have an unexpended balance at the end of the year. The

Amendment will affect in most cases a very small amount of money, and I should think in the majority of cases no money at all, because most of the library authorities spend the full amount of the library rate. Still it would, I think, be of practical advantage to the library authorities to be able to carry over an unexpended balance from one year to another. I beg to move the Amendment standing in my name.

Amendment moved—

"In page 6, line 19, after sub-section (1) to insert new sub-section: 'A committee appointed to carry out the provisions of the Public Libraries Acts shall have power to spend up to the limit of the library rate as fixed when the Acts were adopted, and shall also have power to carry forward any unexpended balance at the end of the financial year without diminution of the rate for the succeeding year.'"—(The Lord Windsor.)

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (The Duke of DEVONSHIRE): The Amendment moved by the noble Lord is inadmissible, however good the arguments may be in its favour, inasmuch as it will amount to an Amendment of the Libraries Act, and I think it would prove extremely inconvenient to insert an Amendment of that Act in a Bill for the government of London.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

*LORD TWEEDMOUTH: My Lords, the Amendment which I now beg to move is to the second sub-section of the clause, which provides that, to the extent to which the council so directs, the acts and proceedings of the committee shall not require the approval of the council. I propose to omit the words, "but to the extent to which the council so direct," and also to leave out the word "not." The Amendment is a very important one, and I hope it will be carefully considered by your Lordships. I think I shall be able to show a very good case for it on theoretical and practical grounds, and also from the analogy of the powers given to other bodies by recent Local Government Acts on this subject. Like other local authorities, the new councils will do their administrative and executive work by committees. I do not know that government by committee is a thing that commends itself very greatly to me. I should prefer a system of government which would throw

responsibility on individuals, but as we have this system of government by committee we must make the best of it. It seems to me that the way to make the best of it is to throw the same responsibility on the committee, as far as possible, that you would throw on an individual; and I think that responsibility is best thrown on these committees by making them invariably report to the bodies that appoint them, and receive from those bodies the sanction of their acts. It may be said that this would cause delay, but I do not think it would. I have the honour to occupy a seat on a small County Council in Berwickshire, and also on the London County Council, and both these bodies are extremely jealous of their committees, and insist upon frequent reports from them as to the actions they have taken. As a matter of fact, the ordinary work of these local bodies is to register, or to homologate, the decisions of the various committees—to accept them and carry them into effect. We find in practice that in very rare cases indeed does the appointing body (the council) interfere with the decisions of the committee. In cases where they do not accept them they seldom throw over the suggestions altogether, but refer the particular report back to the committee, and request a further report on the particular subject. That is a practice which seems to work extremely easily and well, and it does seem to me that you should insist, in the case of new bodies, that the committees should report to the councils. I think in the very wording of the Bill the Government admit the soundness of my theory, for they practically say the committee shall report to the councils unless the councils otherwise direct. I have taken the trouble to extract from the various statutes the exact provisions with regard to reports from committees as they apply to other local bodies. I should like the House to remember that under this Bill, and by the repeated explanations of the Government, these new bodies are to be considered as borough councils. They are not to be county boroughs. They are borough councils, and follow the analogy of borough councils in the country. In the Metropolitan Management Act of 1855 power is given to the Metropolitan Board of Works to appoint committees, and to act by means of committees,

“provided always that the acts of every such committee shall be submitted to the general

body of the board or vestry appointing such committee for their approval.”

In 1862 that Act was modified so far as the Metropolitan Board of Works was concerned, and it was enacted that that Board should be at liberty to give instructions to any committee appointed by them, but that committee should report to the Board all acts done by them in conformity with such instructions. The provision, so far as the vestries were concerned, was kept in the Bill as in 1855, no change whatever being made. In the Public Health Act, 1875, the provision is:

“Provided, that a committee so appointed shall in no case be authorised to borrow any money, make any rate, or enter into any contract, and shall be subject to any restrictions or regulations of the authority which formed it.”

In the Municipal Corporations Act of 1882, which regulates the proceedings of municipalities throughout the country, the provision with regard to committees is a very clear and a very strong one. It is:

“The council may from time to time appoint out of their own body such and so many committees, either of a general or special character, and consisting of such a number of persons as they think fit, for any purposes which, in the opinion of the council, would be better regulated and managed by means of such committees, but the acts of every such committee shall be submitted to the council for their approval.”

That is the rule still, so far as borough councils are concerned, in the country, though not in the case of county boroughs, which are dealt with under the Local Government Act of 1888. In the Local Government Act of 1894, which deals with district and parish councils, I find that a provision has been inserted that the acts of every committee shall be submitted to the council for their approval. That refers to the parish councils and district councils under the Act of 1894. It will probably be said that a different aspect was given to this subject by the Act of 1888. In that Act there were introduced words very much of the same character as those in the present Bill, and it was laid down that every committee should report its proceedings to the council by whom it was appointed, but, to the extent to which the council so directed, the acts and proceedings of the committee should not require, by the provisions of the Municipal Corporations Act of 1882, to

be submitted to the council for their approval. The Government have, as I have said, again and again insisted that these new bodies are to be considered as borough councils. I admit that, under the Act of 1888, the necessity of reporting to the council was waived so far as county boroughs and county councils were concerned when the direction was given by the council dispensing with such report. But, under the Act of 1888, further stringent conditions were imposed on the committees, for by that Act the appointment of a finance committee was made imperative on each authority which was dealt with under the Act. It was laid down that all liabilities incurred over £50 must receive the sanction of the council and the finance committee. In the present Bill there is no financial limit whatever placed upon the liabilities that may be incurred by the committees. It is said they shall only spend what the council may direct them to spend, but the council may say with regard to a particular matter, "You shall have a free hand up to a certain sum," and they may spend that sum if they like. There is no requirement that the spending of that sum shall be subject to the approval of the council. I do not throw any sort of slur on the character of these borough councils, but still, you are creating twenty-seven of them in London, and you may depend upon it that you will have varying qualities among the councils, just in the same way that you have varying qualities among the vestries. We have, on the authority of the Prime Minister himself, the assurance that these bodies are nothing more nor less than vestries, and the noble Marquess told us yesterday that the powers they would have to discharge are the powers now discharged by the vestries. Therefore, I would ask the House seriously to consider whether it is not reasonable to require that these committees to report in all cases to the council.

Amendment moved—

"In page 6, line 21, to leave out 'but to the extent to which the council so direct,' and insert 'and'"—(*The Lord Tweedmouth*).

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: My Lords, I think the noble Lord gave substantially the answer to his own Amendment when he admitted that the Local Government Act of 1888 contained the

Lord Tweedmouth,

same provisions as the present Bill. That appears to be the latest precedent, and it is the one we have followed. The clause provides everything which appears to be necessary. It enacts that the committees shall report to the council, that the council shall have complete power over the proceedings of its committees, and that the council can require that every such proceeding shall be submitted for their confirmation. It does not appear to me that any further power is required. I cannot pretend to have had the same experience of the proceedings of local bodies which my noble friend says he has had, but I think that in my very limited experience I can recall cases in which formal confirmation of proceedings of a committee has embodied either a resolution of very great length or a great number of resolutions, entering into a great variety of details over which the council itself could not possibly exercise any supervision. If this Amendment is carried it might be necessary that a great variety of the proceedings of committees involving matters of very small importance should be separately submitted to the borough council, which would cause a considerable waste of time. The answer to my noble friend is that we have adopted the latest precedent, and that all necessary power is preserved to the new borough councils by the provisions in the Bill.

*THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: I have never in my experience found any inconvenience arise from committees being required to obtain the assent of the council to their proposals. It is the usual practice, and it is a very convenient practice. In the Council with which I am connected no other practice would be tolerated. The noble Duke says the proposal in this Bill is in the Act of 1888, which regulates county councils. With regard to the particular words of this particular clause that is the case; but the noble Duke did not answer the point put by my noble friend, namely, that in this Bill there is no obligation on the committees to refer any expenditure they propose to a finance committee. County councils have a finance committee by Act of Parliament, and the other committees are obliged to refer any proposals of expenditure exceeding £50 to that committee, and it is with the report of the two committees before

them that the county council decides in the matter. You are not putting these new bodies, in this respect, either in the position of borough councils or county councils.

*THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK: The experience of my noble friend is not in accordance with mine. In the Act of 1888 there are powers given to county councils to delegate a certain class of business to committees, and the County Council over which I have the honour to preside does delegate certain

powers to its committees, and this is found extremely convenient. The words of the clause as they now stand seem to be entirely in accordance with the practice of county councils so far as I have any knowledge of them. The point raised with regard to the finance committee is a good one, but that, I understand, comes up in the next Amendment.

On question, whether the words proposed to be left out shall stand part of the clause, their Lordships divided—Contents, 94; Not-Contents, 21.

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Chelmsford, L.
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Clanwilliam, L. (*E. Clan-*
william.)
Clonbrock, L.
Colchester, L.
Colville of Culross, L.
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Herschell, L.

Hobhouse, L.
Monkswell, L.
Reay, L.
Ribblesdale, L. [*Teller.*]
Thring, L.
Tweedmouth, L.
Wandsworth, L.

LORD MONKSWELL: The noble Duke stated that in the matter of committees he would follow the precedent of the county councils rather than the pre-

cedent of the municipal corporations, and I therefore move the Amendment standing in my name with very considerable confidence. Under the Act of 1888

the county councils throughout the country, including the London County Council, are obliged to have a finance committee, and are subject to the restrictions mentioned in my clause with regard to expenditure. I do not know whether the noble Duke will say that he considers this proposal ought not to have been in the original Act of 1888, that it has worked badly, and that that is the reason why he opposes it; but if the noble Duke does not go that length, and is willing to retain this section in the Act of 1888, he can hardly, on his own showing, prevent it being applicable to these new councils. I may mention that this proposal did not emanate originally from a source which the noble Duke might regard with suspicion. It emanated from Captain Jessel, who is a staunch supporter of Her Majesty's Government, and I believe the only reason why it was rejected was that Captain Jessel proposed to legislate by reference. I have set out in the clause which I now move the exact words of Sub-section 3 of Section 80 of the Local Government Act of 1888. I trust, therefore, that the Government will accept my Amendment.

Amendment moved—

"In page 6, line 25, after Sub-section 2, to insert: 'Every borough council shall from time to time appoint a finance committee for regulating and controlling the finance of the council; and no order for payment of any sum shall be made by a borough council, except in pursuance of a resolution of the council passed on the recommendation of the finance committee; and any costs, debt, or liability exceeding £50 shall not be incurred, except upon a resolution of the council passed on an estimate submitted by the finance committee. The notice of the meeting at which any resolution for the payment of any sum out of the borough council's fund, or any resolution for incurring any costs, debt, or liability exceeding £50 will be proposed, shall state the amount of the said sum, costs, debt, or liability, and the purpose for which they are to be paid or incurred.'—(*The Lord Monkswell.*)

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: My Lords, I do not think the argument which I used on the former Amendment is inconsistent with that which I shall use on this occasion. The noble Lord admits, I presume, that the establishment of a finance committee has not been found necessary in the case of borough councils. The legislation as to county councils, to which I referred just now, was in the direction of giving the county councils greater freedom than had been

Lord Monkswell.

given in one respect to borough councils, and this Amendment is in the direction of imposing a restriction upon the London borough councils which does not exist, and which has not been found necessary, in the case of provincial borough councils. But, my Lords, I do not rest my argument in support of this clause as it stands merely on the precedents which have been created by legislation. The reason this provision has not been inserted in the Bill is that, from inquiry, the Local Government Board has ascertained that the absence of a finance committee has not been found to have been productive of any inconvenient results in the case of borough councils, but that, on the other hand, the establishment of finance committees in connection with the county councils has not been altogether without inconvenience. It is therefore on the ground of practical experience, based upon the opinion of those best qualified to judge, that we feel it necessary to oppose this Amendment.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: My Lords, I have certainly heard with great astonishment the statement of the noble Duke that the finance committees of the county councils have been productive of inconvenience. My confidence is not so supreme in the Local Government Board as to take their opinion as worth very much. There has no doubt been some dispute between the county councils and the Local Government Board, with the result that the latter have got the worst of it in consequence of there being a vigilant finance committee. I do not think we should be influenced by a statement of the sort made by the noble Duke. This is a question to be decided upon its merits. Surely, it cannot be reasonable that these new bodies should be free from the check to which both provincial and county councils are subject, and that their committees should be free from the obligation of reporting their proceedings to the council.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: The clause contains a provision that every committee must report to the council.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: Only to the extent to which the council may direct. The words are not absolute. It is very possible that some councils, not

being active in their business, will leave it to these committees to proceed as they please, and the matters will never come before the councils at all, with the result that there will be no check whatever upon their proceedings. I contend that a finance committee is a most desirable institution, and even if it does not exist in the provincial councils, I do not see why it should not be required in the case of these borough councils. I suppose the object of the Government is not to slavishly follow the precedents of the old Acts by which the borough councils are regulated, but to make those regulations which seem most likely to secure good administration. I should have thought this was a proposal about which there could be no doubt whatever, and that a finance committee could not possibly be any inconvenience, but, on the other hand, would ensure proper administration of the various financial matters which may have to be decided. For these reasons I hope that the Government will, on reconsideration, be inclined to accept this Amendment, which in no way goes against the policy of the Bill.

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: I think the noble Earl is under a misapprehension. He seems to think that the committees need only report to the council to the extent to which the council may direct. If he will look at Subsection 2, he will see that it provides:

"Every committee shall report their proceedings to the council, but, to the extent to which the council so direct, the acts and proceedings of the committee shall not require the approval of the council. Provided that a committee shall not raise money by loan or by rate, or spend any money beyond the sum allowed by the council."

Therefore the clause states that every committee shall report, except to the extent to which the council shall direct. It is imperative upon the committees to report unless otherwise directed. The noble Earl also seemed to think that the clause, as it stands, enacts that there shall be no finance committee. It simply leaves it to each council to determine whether they will have a finance committee or not. After making inquiry, the Government have come to the conclusion that it would be well to put confidence in the councils to that extent.

***THE MARQUESS OF RIPON:** The noble Duke said it was not advisable to

place restrictions on these new bodies which are not placed upon other borough councils, but I would point out that you have already deviated from that principle by the terms of the clause which enables committees, with the consent of the council, to act without reporting to the council.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: They must report. It is only the approval which is not needed in such a case.

***THE MARQUESS OF RIPON:** Therefore they may act without obtaining the approval of the council. That is a principle which, as the noble Duke must know, having held the position of mayor, is unknown in borough councils. They always insist that every action of their committees should be submitted for their approval. I beg to differ from the noble Duke's statement that, in regard to county councils, finance committees have not been found to work well. I have found that finance committees exercise a very necessary control over the finances of the council. The Local Government Act of 1888 was founded on the Municipal Corporations Act, but its authors deliberately determined to depart from that Act in this respect, and to establish finance committees in the case of county councils. Does the noble and learned Lord mean to say that he will trust these glorified vestries more than he trusts the county councils? If it was necessary to put this restriction upon county councils, it is not unreasonable to ask that a similar precaution should be adopted in this case.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND: I should not like what has just been said by the noble Marquess, with reference to his experience of finance committees of county councils, to pass without saying a word upon the matter. I am chairman of a County Council, and I am by no means convinced that finance committees have always worked well. I can conceive very great difficulties arising in connection with them. The difficulty is that no expenditure can be incurred by a county council except with the consent of the finance committee. The result is to make the finance committee the ultimate master of the conduct of the county council in very many cases. Although I do not express any opinion

as to whether it is wise or not to amend this clause in the way proposed, at the same time I could not allow the observations of the noble Marquess to pass.

LORD THRING: I have had considerable experience in the preparation of documents constituting county councils and every description of local bodies, and I have, I believe, had as much experience in local government as any member of your Lordships' House. I can safely say that the Local Government Board know about as much of what is going on in the county councils as they do about what is going on in the planet of Mars. They oppose every improvement, and contest everything the county councils do. We who have had experience of county councils and other public bodies know that there is nothing which those bodies are more apt to do than to disregard finance, and a finance committee is a most valuable adjunct to local bodies in the direction of controlling expenditure. In every case in which I have been consulted—and, as the noble and learned Lord opposite knows, they have been very many—I have invariably recommended a finance committee, and I have always found these committees work well.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: The speech of the noble Lord the Duke of Northumberland, afforded a good argument in favour of this Amendment. The noble Duke said that, as chairman of a county council, he could conceive difficulties arising between the finance committee and the other committees, but the noble Duke has not told us that he has found difficulties arise.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND: We have been very near it.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: That rather proves that the finance committee has exercised a useful controlling force over the other committees and the council itself. There always is a little difficulty between the person who controls the purse and those who desire to spend the money. I think that all the arguments are in favour of the Amendment, and I hope your Lordships will insist on these bodies having a finance committee to control them.

Duke of Northumberland.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: I do not know why the noble Lord opposite should say that the Local Government Board know no more about the proceedings of the county councils than of the planet of Mars. Seeing that they have to audit the accounts of the councils, I should think they ought to know something about them. It seems to me that it would be a much stronger argument if noble Lords opposite could point to any experience in the history of municipal councils to show that the want of a finance committee has caused any inconvenience. My information is that no inconvenience has been experienced, and, that being so I fail to see why we should saddle the new boroughs with this committee.

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK: I am thoroughly satisfied that finance committees have been of very great value in the working of county councils, and I shall vote for the Amendment. Where a finance committee is appointed, no order for the payment of any sum can be made by the council except in pursuance of a resolution of the finance committee. That acts as a check, and secures that all the payments are made in a regular manner. In Hampshire we have found it of great advantage that estimates should be thrashed out by the finance committee before being brought up to the county council. By the clause which we have just passed, we give the committees of the new borough councils power to spend money without the control of the council, and that is a power which should not be given without the check of a finance committee. On one occasion we passed a resolution in the Hampshire Council which was not in accordance with the opinion of the finance committee. The finance committee met and eventually accepted the decision of the Council in the matter. I take it that that is what any sensible finance committee would do after the question had been fully discussed and decided by the council. I do not think any difficulty would arise in this direction, and I regard the possession of a finance committee as a very valuable one.

EARL SPENCER: I should like to give my testimony to the usefulness of the finance committee in relation to the

proper control of expenditure, and I think it will lead to considerable extravagance if the various committees are able to decide what they should spend. So far as friction goes, I have never known, certainly in my county, a case in which there has been any friction between the finance committee and the council. I regret to hear the noble Duke's remarks in derogation of finance committees, and I fail to see why a system which has worked exceedingly well elsewhere should not be adopted in the new municipal bodies in London.

*EARL RUSSELL: I would remind the noble Earl on the front Ministerial bench, who is the Leader of the Moderate Party in the London County Council

(the Earl of Onslow), that some two or three years ago, when that Party was more in the ascendancy than they are at present, they impressed very much upon the Council the importance of strengthening the control of the finance committee, and they introduced a number of new practices tending to that end. That being so, I should like to know how it can be suggested that the Vestry of Paddington and others in London require less financial control than was deemed necessary in the case of the London County Council and others throughout the country.

On Question, "That these words shall be here inserted," their Lordships divided: Contents, 65; Not-Contents, 50.

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Knutsford, V.
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Chester, L. Bp.
London, L. Bp.
Winchester, L. Bp.

Aberdare, L.
Aldenharn, L.
Ashcombe, L.
Barnard, L.
Bolton, L.
Boston, L.
Boyle, L. (*E. Cork and Orrery.*)
Brougham and Vaux, L.
Burghclere, L.
Carysfort, L. (*E. Carysfort.*)
Chelmsford, L.
Coleridge, E.
Crawshaw, L.
Davey, L.
Hawkesbury, L. [*Teller.*]
Heneage, L.
Herries, L.
Hobhouse, L.
Hood of Avalon, L.

Kenyon, L.
Llangattock, L.
Loch, L.
Manners of Haddon, L.
(*M. Granby.*)
Middletown, L.
Monckton, L. (*V. Galway.*)
Monkswell, L.
Norton, L.
Penrhyn, L.
Reay, L.
Ribblesdale, L. [*Teller.*]
St. Levan, L.
Stalbridge, L.
Sudley, L. (*E. Arran.*)
Suffield, L.
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Cross, V. (*L. Privy Seal.*)

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Marlborough, D.
Northumberland, D.

Ailesbury, M.
Lansdowne, M.
Salisbury, M.
Zetland, M.

Pembroke and Montgomery, E. (*L. Steward.*)
Brownlow, E.
Carnwath, E.
Denbigh, E.

Doncaster, E. (*D. Buccleuch and Queensberry.*)
Dudley, D.
Egerton, E.
Mar and Kellie, E.
Morton, E.
Onslow, E.
Orford, E.
Selborne, E.
Waldegrave, E. [*Teller.*]

Hopetoun, L. (*E. Hopetoun.*)
(*L. Chamberlain.*)
Amptill, L.
Ashbourne, L.
Balfour, L.
Belper, L.
Churchill, L. [*Teller.*]
Clonbrock, L.
Colchester, L.

Colville of Culross, L.
Cottesloe, L.
De Mauley, L.
Erskine, L.
Farquhar, L.
Glensack, L.
Harris, L.
James, L.
Kintore, L. (*E. Kintore.*)
Lawrence, L.
Muncaster, L.
Muskerry, L.
Rowton, L.
Sherborne, L.
Shute, L. (*V. Barrington.*)
Tredegar, L.
Tweeddale, L. (*M. Tweeddale.*)
Wantage, L.

Clause 8, as amended, agreed to.

LORD MONKSWELL: I propose to insert a new clause after Clause 8, providing that all payments to, and out of, the fund of the borough council should be made to, and by, the borough treasurer, and all payments out of the fund should, unless made in pursuance of the specific requirements of an Act of Parliament, or of an order of a competent Court, be made in pursuance of an order of the council, signed by three members of the finance committee present at the meeting of the council, and countersigned by the town clerk. I do not know whether the noble Duke would like time to consider whether he will accept this Amendment.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: My Lords, I confess that, not having anticipated the decision at which your Lordships arrived on the last Amendment, I have not given very much attention to this clause, which is, as the noble Lord said, rather consequential upon the one which has just been accepted. However, I will offer no opposition to the clause at this stage, subject to its being examined before the Report stage.

LORD MONKSWELL: Then I will move my Amendment.

Amendment moved—

“To insert new clause:

“8A.—(1) All payments to and out of the fund of the borough council shall be made to and by the borough treasurer, and all payments out of the fund shall, unless made in pursuance of the specific requirement of an Act of Parliament, or of an order of a competent Court, be made in pursuance of an order of the council signed by three members of the finance committee present at the meeting of the council, and countersigned by the town clerk, and the same order may include several payments. Moreover, all cheques for payment of moneys issued in pursuance of such order shall be countersigned by the town clerk, or by a deputy approved by the council.

“(2) Any such order may be removed into the High Court of Justice by writ of certiorari, and may be wholly or partly disallowed or confirmed on motion and hearing, with or without costs, according to the judgment and discretion of the Court.”—(*The Lord Monkswell.*)

On Question, “That these words shall be here inserted,” agreed to.

Clause 9 :—

Verbal Amendments agreed to.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: My Lords, I beg to move an Amendment with the object of simplifying the rating in the new boroughs. I propose that the third sub-section of the clause should be so amended as to provide that after the appointed day the general rate, including the school board rate, the police rate, the county rate, and all money required for purposes other than for the Poor Law, should be raised by an equal rate in the £ over the whole area of the borough. As the Bill at present stands, you may have different rates in each parish of a borough. My Amendment will secure one general rate, which will be easier to collect and simpler for the ratepayers to understand, and which will really promote the efficiency of the Bill.

Amendment moved—

“In page 7, line 7, to leave out from ‘be’ to the end of the sub-section, and insert ‘raised by an equal rate in the pound over the whole area of the borough.’”—(*The Lord Tweedmouth.*)

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: I believe the noble Lord has stated with perfect accuracy what the case is, and the effect of his Amendment. So far as the object of the Amendment is to equalise the rates throughout the borough the Government are perfectly in harmony with the noble Lord; but I apprehend that the means which he proposes to secure his object would, to a certain extent, be inexpedient, and would alter by a side wind, and in a most inconvenient manner, the existing law of rating. We hope that the object which the noble Lord has in view will be secured by the exercise of the powers of the Commissioners in carrying out, as far as practicable, the policy of combining parishes. That is the course which I believe has been adopted to a very great extent in municipal boroughs generally. The procedure in the Bill is that which at present exists in every other borough, and I apprehend that very great inconvenience might ensue from departing from the parish as the unit of rating, and establishing a system of rating over the whole borough which does not exist in every other case.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: I admit that my Amendment is injured by the decision the House has come to with regard to the Adoptive Acts. The Adoptive Acts would have had really to come under this general rate, and I should have been by this Amendment reversing the decision of the House on that point. For that reason I do not intend to press my Amendment, but I ventured to say what I did upon it because it seems to me a matter of some importance, and the noble Duke himself has agreed that it is desirable that there should be one general rate extending over the whole borough.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS: I have an Amendment after Sub-section 3, which I hope will commend itself to your Lordships. Its object is to secure justice for parishes which are combined under the Bill. The wording of the Amendment is not mine; it has been put on the Paper at the wish of the Parish of St. James's. Of the Vestry of that parish I have the honour to be a member, and I am one of those unhappy beings who will be abolished under this Bill, and for whom the noble Duke expressed no pity or compassion. In the proposed new borough of Greater Westminster, which I hope your Lordships will not agree to, ten parishes will be amalgamated, of which St. James's is one. Your Lordships will readily understand that some of these parishes have administered their affairs economically, whilst others have a heavy debt. St. James's is a parish which has fortunately a light debt, and it fears that under the Bill the debts of the other parishes will be spread over the whole of the area. The object of my Amendment is to make it clear that the debts will be apportioned to the different parishes, as at present. I know it will be said that by Clause 15 this object will be attained, but the wording of that clause is as follows:

"A scheme under this Act may make provision for such adjustments as may be required for carrying into effect any of the provisions of this Act, or for preventing any injustice with respect to the incidence of any rate, or the discharge of any liability or otherwise, and in particular for such adjustments as may be required for the efficient maintenance of any libraries, baths, or washhouses which have been maintained under the provisions of any of the Adoptive Acts."

The Parish of St. James's feels strongly the desirability of the intention of the Bill being more clearly expressed. They distrust the word "may" in the first line of the clause, and are anxious that the words which I have put down should be accepted by your Lordships.

Amendment moved—

"In page 7, line 8, after Sub-section (3) to insert: 'Provided that the interest on any loan borrowed by any administrative vestry, district board, commissioners, or other body abolished by this Act, together with any charge for the repayment of such loan, shall continue to be charged exclusively upon the parish or parishes now chargeable therewith, except in any case where such loan is represented by an asset producing an income which is applied in reduction of the amount to be so raised by the borough council.'—(*The Earl of Wemyss.*)

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: My noble friend has anticipated the answer which I have to give. What he desires we believe is effected in a more convenient manner by Sub-section 1, Sub-sub-section (a), of Clause 15. The intention is that all financial arrangements of this sort should be made in a scheme, and we think that will be much more convenient than the proposal of the noble Lord, because in the preparation of a scheme it may in some cases be found that one charge will be balanced by another. The whole of the liability of each parish will have to be taken into account by the Commissioners in settling the scheme, and a more convenient arrangement will be arrived at than could be effected by the Amendment of my noble friend. The principle embodied in the Amendment is the one which we intend and believe will be carried out by the Commissioners.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS: If my noble friend accepts the principle of my Amendment, and if, as he says, the Bill will do all that my Amendment proposes, I certainly shall not press it.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I should be surprised if the noble Duke thought that the further clause to which he has referred carried out the same principle as is proposed in this Amendment, because the Amendment suggests that the whole of the interest upon any loan which has been borrowed shall continue to be paid by the parish which borrowed it, notwithstanding that a portion of that parish

may have been embodied in another parish. That does not seem to be a principle at all compatible with the adjustments which are contemplated in the subsequent clause. I understand the subsequent clause to provide that there shall be an adjustment so as to prevent, if possible, any injustice; but the Amendment now proposed simply says there shall be no adjustment, but that the whole of the interest on any loan shall continue to be charged to the parish to which it is now charged. My reason for calling attention to this matter is that I should not like it to be understood that the principle contained in Lord Wemyss's Amendment is the principle upon which the Commissioners are to act when making adjustments.

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: The noble Lord's Amendment has the effect of making it imperative that the payment of the interest on loans shall always rest with the parish which incurred the loans in the first instance. The clause as it stands says that the matter shall be adjusted, and the justice of the course proposed in the Bill will, I think, be seen in a moment. If the noble Lord will refer to Clause 4, he will see that the property of each parish is to pass into the hands of the borough councils, and you obviously cannot take property away from a parish and still make the parish pay interest on loans borrowed by them. The property would probably be the security for the loan. The Commissioners will have to judge each case as it arises, and make the necessary adjustments.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause 9 agreed to.

Clause 10:—

Drafting Amendments agreed to.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: The object of the Amendment which I have to move to this clause is simply to make clearer the meaning of the precepts which are issued from time to time by the London County Council, and to distinguish between the amount of the rate which is charged for county purposes and the amount charged for equalisation purposes. At the present moment, under the precept issued by the County Council, it is

Earl of Kimberley.

impossible to ascertain on the face of those precepts what portion of the rate goes towards the purposes of the County Council for work done on behalf of London as a whole, and what portion goes in aid of the local authorities for work done by those authorities to which the County Council contributes. It seems to me that the simpler plan would be for the County Council in all these cases to issue two precepts—one showing the money spent for County Council purposes for London as a whole, and the other showing the amount which is given to the local authorities to be spent by them. My Amendment does not raise any question of principle. It only endeavours to make the incidence of the rate clear to the ratepayers.

Amendment moved—

"In page 7, line 31, after 'clerk' to insert, 'provided that a separate precept shall be required for the rate to meet the expenses of services administered by the London County Council, and a separate precept for the rate required to meet the grants paid to the local authorities by the County Council in pursuance of the Local Government Act, 1888, the Public Health (London) Act, 1891, and by this Act, and for the rates required to meet the contributions payable under the London Equalisation of Rates Act, 1894.'"—(*The Lord Tweedmouth.*)

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: I have obtained the opinion of the Local Government Board on this subject, and I am assured that the proviso is unnecessary and may be misleading to the ratepayers. So far as the amount required for the purposes of the Equalisation of Rates Act is concerned, that must be specified in the precept in accordance with that Act; and it would seem that the County Council are at liberty to specify the other items, although they are not obliged to do so. If your Lordships are disposed to accept the authority of the Local Government Board on the question, which appears to be highly technical, I have given the opinion which I have received from them.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause 10, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 11, agreed to.

Clause 12:—

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: My Lords, the object of the Amendment standing in

my name is to provide that where a Poor Law union is in two boroughs, the borough council shall appoint the assessment committee. The clause provides that this shall be the case only when the whole of a union is within the borough. The sectional cases to which my Amendment is directed are only seven in number. For the sake of uniformity of principles of assessment, and for the proper adjustment of equalisation of rates, it is desirable that assessment committees should proceed on similar lines.

Amendment moved—

"In page 8, line 18, to leave out 'where the whole of a Poor Law union is within one borough the assessment committee shall.'"—*(The Lord Tweedmouth.)*

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: According to the Bill, where the whole of a Poor Law union is within one borough, the assessment committee will be appointed by the borough councils as my noble friend desires. The Bill leaves the Poor Law unions untouched as units of Poor Law action, and if you have part of a union in one borough and part in another, my noble friend wishes to cut the union in half and destroy it. I think that, upon reflection, the noble Lord will see that, if a union is cut in two for assessment purposes, and the assessment committee is appointed by two borough councils, great confusion will arise.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Drafting Amendments made.

Clause 12, agreed to.

Clause 13, amended, and agreed to.

Clause 14:—

Drafting Amendments made.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: I have an Amendment to move to this clause, in order to make it perfectly clear that the London County Council shall have a right to appear in relation to any scheme or Order before the Commissioners and the Committee of the Privy Council in respect of any of the matters referred to them by this Bill. The London County Council is a body which will be greatly affected by the schemes under this Bill,

and I think it is only fair that their right to appear before any body holding inquiries for the purpose of these schemes should be made clear.

Amendment moved—

"In page 9, line 14, at the end of the clause to insert, '(5) The London County Council shall be entitled to make representations to the Commissioners and to the Committee of the Privy Council in respect to any of the matters referred to them by this Act, and shall be entitled to be heard in support of such representations.'"—*(The Lord Tweedmouth.)*

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: The Amendment of my noble friend cannot be accepted. He is, in our opinion, asking more for the London County Council than is justified. All the parties interested will have the right to appear—those who have a *locus standi* will be heard; but to select the London County Council and give them the right to appear by counsel and witnesses in relation to any matter referred to in the Act would be to give to them a right and undue preference which they cannot fairly claim.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I am astonished at the reply given by the noble and learned Lord. Why should it be undue preference to give the County Council this power? It would be undue preference if it were given to any other body but the London County Council, and I contend that, as it is the function of the London County Council to represent the interests of the whole body of the metropolitan ratepayers, it is desirable for the public advantage and the assistance of the Commissioners that they should have this right, and there is no reason to apprehend its abuse. I cannot conceive that anything but great advantage can follow from giving this power to the County Council, who have been elected expressly for the purpose of representing, not merely the ratepayers of some particular borough, but the interests of the whole of the metropolis.

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: The London County Council will have the right to appear when, in the opinion of the Privy Council or the Commissioners, they have any interest.

LORD DAVEY: I understand the noble and learned Lord to say that the County Council and other persons interested will

have the power to appear. I confess that I cannot find anything in Clause 14 which will make it the legal duty of the Commissioners or the Committee of the Privy Council to hear anyone at all, or to attend to the criticisms of any body whatever. Therefore I entirely dissent from my noble and learned friend when he says that the London County Council will have the right to appear. Of course, the Commissioners may collect opinions from any quarter they think fit, and they may think fit to go to the London County Council for an expression of opinion, but that is entirely optional. What the Amendment asks for is that the London County Council, on behalf of the whole of the ratepayers of London, who have to pay for all the proceedings of the Commissioners, should have the right, not merely if they are asked by the Commissioners, but should have the right of themselves to initiate any representation to the Commissioners and support their views by producing evidence, or any other means which the proceedings before the Commissioners may render proper. The London County Council do not ask for preference to be given to them; all they desire is to have the right to be heard, and not left out in the cold.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I should like to point out that there is in the Bill itself very strong reason why the County Council should be heard, because Sub-section 4 of Clause 14 provides:

"Any expense incurred by the committee under this Act shall, to the amount certified by the Treasury, be paid by the London County Council out of the County Fund."

Is it not reasonable that the whole of the ratepayers of London, who have to find the money, should have representation? Most certainly they are entitled to a *locus standi*.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: All that is contended is that it shall be made clear that the London County Council shall, in common with other bodies, have the right of appearing before the Privy Council and making representations when they think necessary. I do not insist on the absolute wording of my Amendment, and if the noble Duke will consent to the insertion of other words, which will secure to the London County Council the

right to appear before the Privy Council in connection with matters in which they are interested, I should be prepared to withdraw my Amendment.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: I do not know how noble Lords opposite suppose that the Commissioners are going to prepare these schemes unless they hear everybody concerned. The noble Earl the Earl of Kimberley knows perfectly well that in the preparation of similar schemes in the case of petitions for charters of municipal incorporation the Commissioners hear every person who is supposed to be interested in the subject. I do not see that it is necessary to insert anything, as every possible facility will be given to the London County Council to approach the Privy Council when it is thought necessary.

LORD DAVEY: If that is so, there would be no harm in putting in the words. It is quite possible that the Commissioners may take a peculiar view as to who are interested, and as to the interest which the County Council may have. I certainly think the matter should be made clear.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: So far as my experience goes, I do not quite see the force of the argument used by the noble Duke—namely, that in the case where charters are applied for it is not the habit of the Privy Council to enforce any special procedure, but to hear anybody who wishes to be heard. This is an Act of Parliament constituting new bodies, and not merely granting a charter to a borough which has defined boundaries. Under this Bill the Commissioners and the Privy Council will have to determine a great variety of extremely difficult points with regard to boundaries and other matters, and I do not think you can be governed by precedent in a case of this kind. No more intricate task can be set before a body of men than that with which the Privy Council and the Commissioners will have to deal, and in these circumstances we ought to say definitely that the London County Council should have the right to go before the Privy Council and the Commissioners, and make its statement upon the proposals in whatever form it may think desirable.

Lord Davey.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: The matters to be dealt with in these schemes may possibly be more important and more complicated than in the case of the granting of a municipal charter, but they are analogous in every sense.

***EARL RUSSELL:** I do not think the sneers which have been made at the London County Council during this Debate should be allowed to pass. "Why should the London County Council be heard, and why should they have an undue preference?" asks the noble and learned Lord. My answer is—because the London County Council is the only body which can speak for London as a whole. If the Commissioners, in the course of their proceedings, come across local rivalries and local jealousies, who are more fit to give them information from an impartial point of view, and with a great wealth of knowledge upon the facts, than the officers of the London County Council? If Her Majesty's Government desires that the proceedings of the Commissioners should give satisfaction, and should be conducted with the greatest possible assistance that can be obtained, I cannot understand what reason can be put forward for excluding the London County Council from being heard, and I trust the Amendment will be accepted.

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: I entirely disclaim the suggestion that the London County Council have been sneered at during this Debate, and I assure the noble Lord that nothing could be farther from our minds. I still, however, think that the words "undue preference" were rightly used. Whenever the County Council is interested it will be heard. What is asked by the Amendment is that there shall be a hard and fast line drawn, and that even if the London County Council is not interested, and if the tribunal thinks it is not interested, the tribunal shall be compelled, nevertheless, to hear it at the will of the advisers of the London County Council. Is it

right that we should place upon the Statute Book a provision that the tribunal should be compelled to hear a party in opposition to a point in which it is not interested?

***THE MARQUESS OF RIPON** May I ask the noble Lord what question there is in a Bill of this description with which the London County Council are not interested?

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: The Privy Council will be able to say if the London County Council are interested or not.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: That is exactly what I object to. Are we going to abnegate our right as one of the Houses of Parliament in this matter, and place ourselves in the hands of the Privy Council? When we are legislating, and asking the Privy Council to undertake certain duties, it is for us to determine the conditions under which the Privy Council is to conduct the inquiry. All we contend is that, in order that the Privy Council may have the opinion of the body which alone represents the whole of London, it is desirable that we should place in the Bill words similar to those proposed in the Amendment, in order that there will be no doubt in the matter. I cannot help thinking that the amount of opposition which has been shown to this Amendment proves that there must be, somewhere, not only a doubt, but a hope that the Council will not be heard. If, as we are told, the Privy Council will hear, as a matter of course, what the County Council will bring before them, there can be no objection to inserting words at the end of the clause giving the London County Council the right to make representations to the Commissioners and to the Committee of the Privy Council in respect to any of the matters referred to them by the Act.

On Question, "That these words be here inserted," their Lordships divided: Contents, 24; Not-Contents, 81.

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Clause 14, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 15:—

THE EARL OF WEMYSS: My Lords, the first line of this section says that a scheme under this Act "may" make provisions for such adjustments as may be required for carrying any of the provisions of this Act, or from preventing any injustice with respect to the incidence of any rate or the discharge of any liability or otherwise. I presume that the word "may" may be read as "shall," from what my noble friend said with reference to the Amendment I proposed at an earlier stage.

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: The word "may," when it is intended to be "shall," is read as "shall."

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: To a lay mind it seems desirable, where you mean "shall," to say "shall," and where you mean "may" to say "may."

THE EARL OF WEMYSS: Will the noble Earl move that?

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: Yes. I move that the word "shall" be inserted instead of the word "may."

Amendment moved—

"In page 9, line 15, to omit 'may' and insert 'shall.'"

On Question, "That 'may' stand part of the clause," agreed to.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: Before the noble Duke the Lord President of the Council moves the Amendment to Clause 15 standing in his name, I desire to call attention again to Sub-section (d), which provides for the adjustments. The noble Duke will remember that I referred yesterday to the question which has arisen in regard to Kensal Town. There is a subsequent Amendment to be moved by Lord Windsor, providing that Kensal Town shall not be severed from Chelsea. I should like to know what course the noble Duke intends to take in the matter before we pass Clause 15. My own opinion is that it is highly desirable that these outlying portions of parishes should be united to some contiguous parish, and I shall be sorry, therefore, if it is found necessary to make this exception, but it may be necessary if there are no other means of making the adjustment. I should be glad if the noble Duke would inform us what his proposal is in the matter.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: We are at the present moment considering the question of Kensal Town, and I hope we shall have a proposal to make at the next stage.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I am much obliged to the noble Duke for that statement, and I hope it will be possible to secure justice without resorting to the Amendment of Lord Windsor.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: My Lords, I now move my Amendment, which provides that a scheme under the Bill may make provision for preserving any right, power, exemption, or immunity heretofore exercised or enjoyed in respect of Crown or Government property, and for alterations of electoral divisions for the purpose of School Board elections rendered necessary by any alterations in the area of the County of London. It is not now clear that such exemptions and immunities as are at present enjoyed in respect of Woolwich Arsenal, the Tower, and other Government buildings, are to be maintained; neither is it clear, without the provision which I now move, that it will be possible to make in the electoral divisions of the School Board for London the alterations consequent upon taking Penge out of London and putting part of Hornsey in.

Amendment moved—

"In page 9, after line 35 to insert:

"(e) for preserving, so far as may appear necessary or expedient, any right, power, exemption, or immunity heretofore exercised or enjoyed in respect of property belonging to, or occupied by, Crown or any Government Department;

"(f) for making such alterations in the boundaries of the electoral divisions for the purpose of school board elections as may be rendered necessary by any alteration in the area of the County of London."—(*The Lord President of the Council.*)

On Question, "That these words be here inserted," agreed to.

LORD MONKSWEILL: The clause as it at present stands enacts that a scheme under the Act may make provision for repealing or modifying any local Act other than the London Building Act, 1894. I am desired by the Commons Preservation Society to ask the noble Duke to consider whether he would not also insert in this sub-section words pre-

venting a scheme under the Act from repealing or modifying Acts relating to commons and open spaces. The Society is of opinion that Acts relating to open spaces ought to be placed in the same category as the London Building Act, 1894.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: The noble Lord had better put the Amendment down for the next stage, and I will consider it. I have a further Amendment to this clause. Section (a) of my Amendment is already contained in the Bill, but has to be repeated on account of an alteration in its arrangement. The only substantial addition is Section (b) of my Amendment, and the object of that section is to do for Westminster what has already been done for Southwark in the House of Commons.

Amendment moved—

"In page 10, line 15, leave out from 'provisions' to end of clause and insert:

'There shall also be deemed to be local authorities within the meaning of the said provisions:

'(a) the Mayor, Commonalty, and Citizens, and the Court of Aldermen of the City of London, so far as relates to any powers exercisable by them or by officers appointed by them respectively within the ancient Borough of Southwark; and

'(b) The Dean and Chapter of the Collegiate Church of St. Peter, Westminster, so far as relates to any powers of local government exercisable by them or their officers within the Borough of Westminster, and the Court of Burgesses of the ancient City of Westminster.'"

—(*The Lord President of the Council.*)

On Question, "That these words be here inserted," agreed to.

Drafting Amendments made.

Clause 15, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 16 agreed to.

Clause 17:—

THE DUKE OF WESTMINSTER: My Amendment is a very modest one, and it provides that nothing in the Bill shall operate to admit of the severance of the Hamlet of Knightsbridge; or any part thereof, from the parish of St. Margaret's or the Borough of Westminster.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE : Before my noble friend formally moves his Amendment, I would ask him to postpone it until the next stage. Several questions arise on the boundaries of Westminster, and it is hoped that it will be possible to come to a satisfactory arrangement.

THE DUKE OF WESTMINSTER : After what the noble Duke has said I will postpone my Amendment.

Formal Amendments made.

THE EARL OF JERSEY : I have an Amendment to propose which provides that where a detached part of a parish in the County of London is surrounded by more than one county such detached part shall become part of such county as shall be determined by Order in Council. It is felt on the Middlesex County Council that it is only reasonable that compensation should be paid to that body for the loss they will sustain owing to the inclusion of South Hornsey in the area of the County of London. It was stated in the Debate in the other House that the question of compensation would be covered by Clause 15, but I am advised that Clause 15 does not make that quite clear.

Amendment moved—

"In line 13, to leave out from 'county' to 'and' in line 14, and insert 'and where a detached part as aforesaid is surrounded by more than one county, such detached part shall become part of such county as shall be determined by Order in Council under this Act.'"
—(*The Earl of Jersey*.)

***LORD MONKSWELL :** I should like to point out that the inhabitants of South Hornsey are almost to a man desirous of being joined to the County of London, and not to Middlesex. The case of Hornsey will be hard indeed if it is, against its will, attached to Middlesex. The rates of South Hornsey are exceedingly low, and apparently the district is extremely well managed. In any case, South Hornsey is in a very unfortunate position, because, whether it is added to London or Middlesex, there will be a large increase in the South Hornsey rates. If added to Middlesex the increase will be 2s. in the £, but if South Hornsey is added to the County of London the increase will be only 1s. in the £. In a

case of this kind I certainly think South Hornsey should be allowed to choose for itself whether it will be joined to London or Middlesex.

THE EARL OF JERSEY : I would like to ask the noble Lord how he is aware of the fact that the people of South Hornsey are desirous of being joined to the County of London.

***LORD MONKSWELL :** If the figures which I have put before your Lordships are correct, it is only natural that the people of South Hornsey should have but one desire in the matter. Moreover, the local authority has expressed an opinion in the direction I stated.

***THE EARL OF JERSEY :** A poll was taken, and out of 2,465 electors, 1,817 were in favour of South Hornsey remaining in Middlesex.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE : I agree with the Amendment of the noble Lord, and will accept it.

On Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the question," resolved in the negative.

On Question, "That these words be here inserted," agreed to.

Amendment moved—

"In page 11, line 17, after Sub-section (4) to insert, 'The county council of a county to which any part of another county is transferred under Sub-sections (2) or (3) of this section shall pay yearly, on the day corresponding with the date of the passing of this Act, to the county council of the county from which such transfer is made, such a sum as shall represent the equivalent of the county or other like rate for the year of the county from which any part of it is transferred as aforesaid, and which, but for such transfer, would have been leviable on the part so transferred.'"
—(*The Earl of Jersey*.)

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE : I am unable to accept this Amendment. The subject was discussed in the House of Commons, and the conclusion was arrived at, to which I adhere, that this is a matter which must be dealt with by scheme.

***THE EARL OF JERSEY :** Is the noble Duke of opinion that compensation can

be given in a case of this kind without special words being inserted to that effect?

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: Certainly; the Local Government Board are advised that there is full power to compensate any neighbouring county for loss of rateable value. This power has already been exercised, and there are reported decisions.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

***LORD WINDSOR:** I was glad to hear that Her Majesty's Government are considering the question of the detached part of Chelsea, and I hope they will have something to recommend on the lines of the Amendment which I have put on the Paper. The noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Kimberley) called attention yesterday to the considerable inconvenience and hardship which would result if Kensal Town were joined to Paddington. He went fully into the question, and, therefore, it is not necessary for me to refer to it again; but I would venture to suggest that Kensal Town has a brilliant future before it, and should not be allowed, as will be the case under this Bill, to be swallowed like a pill by a reluctant neighbour, for neither Paddington nor Kensington, so far as I understand, desire to take in Kensal Town. The solution of this difficulty might be found in Middlesex giving up a certain portion of their county, and a new borough being formed equal to those which surround it, and of which Kensal Town would be an important part.

Amendment moved—

"In page 11, line 18, after 'London' insert 'or to the detached part of the parish of Chelsea.'"—(*The Lord Windsor.*)

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: I hope the noble Lord will not move his Amendment, as I have the case of Kensal Town under consideration, and hope to make a suggestion upon it at the next stage.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause 17, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 18 agreed to.

Clause 19:—

***LORD TWEEDMOUTH:** I beg to move an Amendment to this clause, enlarging the discretion of the Commissioners by allowing them, if so advised, to constitute Penge, with the addition of the part of the district of Beckenham which is within the metropolitan main drainage area, a separate metropolitan borough. Penge creates a difficulty in this Bill, the solution of which is not easy to find. It is a little outlying district, and must be dealt with exceptionally. By history and connection Penge is undoubtedly a part of London; and though I believe the inhabitants of Penge have expressed their desire to be included in the County of Surrey, I am informed by an expert in rating matters that if Penge is annexed to Surrey the ratepayers will suffer severely in pocket. My proposal will not make any change in the various courses which it is suggested by the Bill should be within the power of the Commissioners to adopt in regard to Penge. The clause provides that an Order in Council may either annex Penge to the Borough of Lewisham or to the Borough of Camberwell, or separate it from the County of London, and make it form part for all purposes of the County of Surrey or of the County of Kent. I wish to recommend a fifth course, and I would suggest that, under the re-arrangement which I propose, the place might be called Penge-cum-Beckenham, following the course which the Government propose to take with regard to Stoke Newington and South Hornsey. The area of my proposed metropolitan borough is larger than that of Stoke Newington and Hornsey, and the population, which is largely increasing, will be about 30,000, while the rateable value is £223,000. In the clause as it stands the Commissioners are given power to deal with Penge in one of four ways, and I propose to give them power to deal with it in one of five ways.

Amendment moved—

"In page 11, line 39, after 'Camberwell' to insert, or constitute Penge, with the addition of the part of the district of Beckenham which is within the metropolitan main drainage area, a separate metropolitan borough."—(*The Lord Tweedmouth.*)

***LORD ASHCOMBE:** As I have an Amendment, which will come on directly,

in reference to Penge, I should like to point out that Surrey is in the unfortunate position of having two county areas—the administrative county area, which has come into general use, and the area which still exists for Parliamentary purposes, and which is operative in several Acts still in existence. I believe it has been taken for granted, especially by the County Council, that in this Bill the County of Surrey implies the administrative County of Surrey, and if that is the case there is no justification whatever for the claim of Penge to be joined to Surrey, because the Act which formed the County of Surrey also formed the county borough of Croydon, by which Penge was entirely separated from it.

LORD THRING: As a member of the County Council of Surrey, I have no doubt that the County of Surrey referred to in the Bill means the administrative County of Surrey. Penge is contiguous to Kent and Croydon, but not to the County of Surrey, and therefore it will be against all precedent to annex Penge to the administrative County of Surrey. It will, indeed, create a difficulty such as this Bill has been drafted to do away with. The County of Surrey does not want Penge, and I sincerely hope Penge will not be thrust upon it.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: I am afraid I cannot agree to the proposal of the noble Lord opposite, that we should take a part of the district of Beckenham, which is in Kent, and which, as far as we know, does not wish to be included in the metropolitan area. The proposal of the noble Lord would probably lead to considerable anomalies and a great deal of local opposition. I think the best answer I can give to the question which has been asked by the noble Lord behind me (Lord Ashcombe) is to read the clause as it will stand when amended in the direction I shall propose—

“An order in Council under this Act may either annex Penge to the Borough of Lewisham or to the Borough of Camberwell, or separate it from the County of London and make it form part of the County of Surrey or of the County of Kent, and if it is so separated shall provide for constituting it an urban district, or for adding it to an adjoining county borough or urban district, and if necessary shall determine the county electoral division to which it is to belong.”

The clause, as amended in this way, will give the widest discretion to the

Lord Ashcombe.

Commissioners to deal with the case of Penge as they may find most expedient; but it will not include the proposal of the noble Lord opposite to annex a portion of the County of Kent for the purpose of creating another metropolitan borough.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: I now move the Amendment standing in my name, which will effect the alteration in the clause to which I have alluded.

Amendments proposed—

“In page 11, line 40, to leave out ‘for all purposes’; in page 12, lines 1 and 2, to leave out ‘of the appropriate county electoral division thereof, and in the latter case,’ and insert ‘if it is so separated’; and in line 4, after ‘district’ insert ‘and, if necessary, shall determine the county electoral division to which it is to belong.’”

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: As I understand these Amendments, they will give the Commissioners power to determine in what county electoral district Penge is to be included. In all the re-arrangements of boundaries that have taken place under Local Acts care has always been taken not to give any powers to Commissioners to interfere with electoral divisions for Parliamentary purposes. I would ask if there is any precedent for giving such power?

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: The words are “the county electoral division.” The Parliamentary division is not referred to.

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: Is the noble and learned Lord sure of that?

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: That is my opinion, and I am supported by authority higher than my own.

Amendments agreed to:

Clause 19, as amended, agreed to.

LORD GLENESK: May I ask your Lordships' permission to move the insertion of a short permissive clause providing that an Order in Council under this Act may detach Kensington Palace from the Borough of Westminster, and attach it to the Borough of Kensington? It may be

news to your Lordships to be told that Kensington Palace is not in Kensington at all. Kensington was formerly a suburban parish with a small hamlet adjoining. It has now become one of the largest boroughs in London. As a Royal Palace pays no rates, Westminster can lose nothing by the detachment. Westminster revels in palaces already. It has the magnificent palace of Westminster, Buckingham Palace, St. James's Palace, and the Royal residences of Marlborough House, Clarence House, and others, and altogether is provided with an amount of Royalty sufficient to dignify any borough. I think, therefore, that Kensington might now claim what has always been considered her own, prized as it is as the birthplace of the Queen, and for all its historical associations. I think this will clearly appeal to your Lordships, and I beg to move the Amendment of which I have given notice.

Amendment proposed—

"To insert as a new clause, 'An Order in Council under this Act may detach Kensington Palace from the Borough of Westminster, and attach it to the Borough of Kensington.'—*(The Lord Glenesk.)*"

THE DUKE OF WESTMINSTER: I was not prepared for this dagger-thrust at the heart of Westminster. I have never had any idea of such a robbery. Kensington Palace is part and parcel of the Hamlet of Knightsbridge, and the whole of Westminster will be up in arms at the idea of surrendering the historic Palace to the suburb, if I may venture to call it so, of Kensington. I hope your Lordships will not consent to the Amendment.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: I hope my noble friend will not commit himself too strongly on this subject, which is one of a group of the questions affecting Westminster which are now under our consideration, and on which we have some hopes of arriving at an arrangement which may be tolerably satisfactory to all parties concerned. I would ask the noble Lord not to press his Amendment now, but to put it down on the next stage of the Bill, when I may have a proposal to make.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause 20, agreed to.

Clause 21 :—

*THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: I have an Amendment to this clause which provides that the election of churchwardens for the ecclesiastical parish remaining attached to a mother church shall be vested in the inhabitants of such ecclesiastical parish; but I understand from the noble Duke that he desires a little further time for consideration of the question. I therefore propose to postpone the Amendment till the Report stage.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: In my Amendment to Clause 21 I propose to leave out Sub-sections 3, 4, and 5, and insert three other sections in their place and also a sixth section. Sub-section 3, which I propose to leave out, was originally inserted with reference to duties performed by churchwardens in connection with the election of auditors, and is now unnecessary. Sub-section 4 was moved in the other House by Mr. Causton with reference to some Southwark charities, and was accepted under a misapprehension during the hurry of the final stage. It is wrong in form, and, in the opinion of the Charity Commissioners, would produce much confusion and difficulty. The sub-sections which it is proposed to substitute have been very carefully drawn by the Solicitor-General and the Charity Commissioners after considering the circumstances of the different charities in London. They follow as closely as they can the corresponding provisions which were inserted for a similar purpose in the Local Government Act of 1894, and it is believed they will give full power to deal with the various cases as they arise. Under the Act of 1894 the Charity Commissioners have power to apportion charities and determine all questions affecting them, subject to an appeal to the High Court. The sub-section which I move to add is taken from the Municipal Corporations Act of 1883, and probably does no more than declare the existing law, but it will, in the opinion of the Charity Commissioners, be useful in removing misapprehension.

Amendments moved—

"In page 12, line 32, to leave out Sub-sections (3) (4) and (5) and insert :

'(3) As from the appointed day, the churchwardens of every parish within a metropolitan

borough shall cease to be overseers, and references in any Act to the churchwardens and overseers of any such parish shall, except so far as those references relate to the affairs of the church, be construed as references to the council of the borough comprising the parish, and the legal interest in all property vested either in the overseers or churchwardens and overseers of any such parish (other than property connected with the affairs of the church or held for an ecclesiastical charity within the meaning of the Local Government Act, 1894), shall, subject to the provisions of any scheme under this Act, vest in the borough council.

“(4) Provision shall be made by scheme under this Act for substituting nominees of the borough council for overseers as trustees of any charity, due regard being had to the area benefited by the charity.

“(5) The Charity Commissioners shall, for the purposes of this Act, have the like powers with respect to charities, subject to the like appeal, as they have under and for the purposes of the Local Government Act, 1894.

“(6) Nothing in this Act shall affect the right to the benefit of any charity, or shall alter or confer any power of altering the defined charitable purposes (if any) to which any property is by law applicable at the passing of this Act.”—(*The Lord President of the Council.*)

Amendments agreed to.

Clause 21, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 22 agreed to, without discussion.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: The new clause which I propose to add after Clause 22 follows exactly the corresponding provision in the Municipal Corporations Act, 1882. It is made necessary by the provisions in Clauses 4 and 10, which impose duties specifically upon the town clerk.

Amendment proposed, to insert as a new clause—

“In case of the illness or absence of the town clerk, the borough council may appoint a deputy town clerk to hold office during their pleasure, and all things required or authorised by law to be done by or to the town clerk may be done by or to the deputy town clerk, and no defect in the appointment of a deputy shall invalidate his acts.”—(*The Lord President of the Council.*)

On Question, “That this clause be added to the Bill,” agreed to.

Clause 23 agreed to.

Clause 24:—

Formal Amendments agreed to.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: The Amendment standing in my name would enable the London County Council to alter the arrangements for polling districts. I think your Lordships will agree with me that it is very necessary that facilities should be given for the arrangement of polling districts so that the ratepayers and electors may have the power of easily recording their vote. At the present moment the London County Council can divide any parish into wards for the purpose of vestry, guardians, and county council elections, but they cannot make any alterations in those polling districts when once they have been fixed. My Amendment proposes that for the purposes of these local elections the County Council shall be able to arrange the polling stations, and from time to time alter them, as may be found desirable, to meet the convenience of the electors.

Amendment moved—

“In page 14, line 17, after Sub-section (3) to insert as a new sub-section: ‘The London County Council shall have and may from time to time exercise the power to divide any borough in London, or any ward, into polling districts for the purposes of county, borough, or other local elections.’”—(*The Lord Tweedmouth.*)

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: The noble Lord is entitled, I think, to the first part of his Amendment, if we could give it to him. The object of the Amendment, however, is to increase the authority of the London County Council in relation to elections other than those with which the Act is concerned, and the Bill does not offer the opportunity for such an amendment of the law.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: At the present moment the County Council has the power to divide these parishes into polling districts for the election of vestries and district boards, and I contend that they should continue to exercise the same powers in reference to the new bodies.

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: In relation to this Bill the Local Government Board will exercise authority.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: But why should this power be transferred from the London County Council to the Local Government Board?

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: The power is not being transferred. The borough councils are not existing at present.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I might use a very uncivil word with regard to that argument, but I will not. The borough councils, as the noble Marquess said the other night, are simply vestries under another name, and I cannot see what on earth is the use of making this change. I suppose this is another instance of the jealousy which exists, and the desire to keep the County Council out of everything. It is a very pretty attitude.

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: I cannot understand why the London County Council should ask for this power in regard to the new borough councils.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: Why not?

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: We think the new bodies ought to be independent of the County Council.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: That is what I imagined, but I maintain that it is unnecessary and unwise to make a change from the system hitherto followed on the ground of a fictitious independence. I do not imagine that the County Council is such a weak body that it will be affected by this small deduction from its powers; but the Council is, in my opinion, better qualified for this duty than the Local Government Board.

On Question, "That this sub-section be here inserted," their Lordships divided: Contents, 16; Not-Contents, 38.

CONTENTS.

Ripon, M.	Spencer, E.	Hawkesbury, L. [Teller.]
Buckinghamshire, E.	Aberdare, L.	Hobhouse, L.
Carrington, E.	Burghclere, L.	Monkswell, L.
Kimberley, E.	Coleridge, L.	Reay, L.
Russell, E.	Davey, L.	Ribblesdale, L. [Teller.]
		Tweedmouth, L.

NOT-CONTENTS.

Halsbury, E. (<i>L. Chancellor.</i>)	Dudley, E.	Clonbrock, L.
Devonshire, D. (<i>L. President.</i>)	Grey, E.	Cottesloe, L.
Cross, V. (<i>L. Privy Seal.</i>)	Hardwicke, E.	Glenesk, L.
	Morley, E.	Harris, L.
Marlborough, D.	Onslow, E.	James, L.
Westminster, D.	Selborne, E.	Kenry, L. (<i>E. Dunraven and Mount-Earl.</i>)
Lansdowne, M.	Waldegrave, E. [Teller.]	Kintore, L. (<i>E. Kintore.</i>)
Salisbury, M.	Yarborough, E.	Lawrence, L.
		Muskerry, L.
Pembroke and Montgomery, E. (<i>L. Steward.</i>)	Hopetoun, L. (<i>E. Hopetoun.</i>)	Rowton, L.
Camperdown, E.	(<i>L. Chamberlain.</i>)	Shute, L. (<i>V. Barrington.</i>)
Denbigh, E.	Balfour, L.	Teynham, E.
Doncaster, E. (<i>D. Buccleuch and Queensberry.</i>)	Barnard, L.	Tredegar, L.
	Belper, L.	Windsor, L.
	Churchill, L. [Teller.]	

Other Amendments made.

Clause 24, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 25:—

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: I should like to ask the noble Duke whether it is under Sub-section 2 of this clause that the Local Government Board will have the power he alluded to just now of making new polling booths?

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: Yes.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: I asked the question because this is a matter of reference. We were told last night that the Government did not like legislation by reference; but this is entirely legislation by reference.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: What I said was that I personally did not like legislation by reference. However, I will make a note of the noble Lord's observation.

Clause agreed to.

Clauses 26 and 27 agreed to.

Clause 28 :—

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: The addition which I now move is in the nature of a saving clause. The words which it is proposed to add only make clear the object and intention of the clause itself. Under the London Equalisation of Rates Act a fund is raised among the London parishes in proportion to their rateable value, and it is divided amongst the sanitary districts in proportion to population. Obviously, contributions must not be levied there and divided among new areas. This Amendment obviates any difficulty of that kind.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: It will leave the Act to operate practically as it now does, I take it.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: Yes. The areas will be the same, only with some corners cut off, and so on.

Amendments proposed—

"In page 16, line 22, before 'nothing' to insert 'except so far as the areas of parishes and sanitary districts are altered by or under this Act;' and, in line 27, to leave out 'shall constitute' and insert 'constitutes.'" — (*The Lord President of the Council.*)

Amendments agreed to.

Other Amendments made.

Clause 28 agreed to.

Clause 29 :—

LORD TEYNHAM: In explanation of the Amendment which stands in my name, I may say that this Clause 29, which deals with open spaces, was not in the Bill as originally drawn; it was inserted as an Amendment in another place. The Amendment I propose is little more than a verbal one, and is merely intended to strengthen the words of the clause as it at present stands.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 16, line 31, after 'public' to insert 'or any part thereof.'" — (*The Lord Teynham.*)

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: I think this Amendment is unnecessary ;

but if the noble Lord thinks there is any object in it, perhaps he will put it down for the Report stage.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I would point out to the noble Lord that as his Amendment stands his words would come in the wrong place; they would come in better after the word "space," in line 30.

LORD TEYNHAM: I will put the Amendment down for the Report stage.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause 29 agreed to.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: I have a new clause to propose, to come in after Clause 29. By this Bill you supersede a large number of existing bodies which now have power to preserve public documents, and unless some statutory provision is included in this Bill I am afraid many records will stand the risk of being destroyed. I have, therefore, drafted a clause exactly on the same lines as the clause in the Local Government Act of 1894, which provides for the custody of records of these expiring vestries and district bodies. I believe this Amendment really necessary for the safe custody of these records and papers, and I hope my noble friend will see his way to accept it.

Moved, to insert the following new clause—

"(1) All documents required by Statute or by Standing Orders of Parliament to be deposited with the vestry or vestry clerk of a parish in a metropolitan borough shall, from and after the passing of this Act, be deposited with the town clerk of the borough comprising that parish, and the enactments with respect to the inspection of, and taking copies of, and extracts from any such documents, shall apply as if the town clerk were mentioned therein.

"(2) The custody of the registers of baptisms, marriages, and burials, and of all other books and documents containing entries wholly or partly relating to the affairs of the church or to ecclesiastical charities, except documents directed by law to be kept with the public books, writings, and papers of the parish, shall remain as provided by the existing law, unaffected by this Act. All other public books, writings, or papers of a parish in a metropolitan borough, and all documents directed by law to be kept therewith, shall be deposited in such custody as the council of the borough comprising that district may direct. The incumbent and churchwardens on the one part,

and the council of the borough comprising the parish on the other, shall have reasonable access to all such books, documents, writings, and papers as are referred to in this sub-section, and any difference as to custody or access shall be determined by the London County Council.

"(3) The London County Council shall from time to time inquire into the manner in which the public books, writings, papers, and documents under the control of the council of a metropolitan borough are kept, with a view to the proper preservation thereof, and shall make such orders as they think necessary for such preservation, and those orders shall be complied with by the borough council."—(*The Lord Tweedmouth.*)

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE : I would point out to the noble Lord that Clause 4 of the Bill transfers the books and papers of the old vestries to their successors, in accordance with the provisions of the scheme. The specific proposals which the noble Lord makes in his Sub-sections 2 and 3 would probably give rise to a good deal of argument, and it is believed that all that is necessary can be done by a scheme. I believe that in the other House the First Lord of the Treasury expressed a great deal of sympathy with the object of this Amendment, and reminded the House that he had promised an inquiry into the best mode of providing for the custody of local records, not merely in London, but throughout the country. But, as it will be incumbent on the new bodies to receive and take charge of the existing records and documents, I do not know that it will be necessary to make any special provisions in their case. With regard to the third sub-section, which authorises the London County Council to :

"inquire into the manner in which the public books, writings, papers, and documents under the control of the council of a metropolitan borough are kept,"

I think that would be greatly resented ; it would point to the invidious inference that the borough councils were not competent to perform what undoubtedly would be one branch of their duties.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH : I am sorry to say that I cannot find in Clause 4 any reference whatever to books, papers, or documents.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE : "Property."

LORD TWEEDMOUTH : "Property" is a large word, no doubt, and it may

cover books and documents ; but these are not things generally understood to come under that term. At any rate, I think the noble Lord might meet my point by including in Clause 4 a specific reference to "books, documents, writings, and papers."

***LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD :** The word "property" is really quite sufficient. If anyone should steal the books and documents of my noble friend, he would be indicted for stealing the property of Lord Tweedmouth.

On Question, "That the proposed clause be here inserted," resolved in the negative.

Remaining clauses agreed to, with Amendments.

Standing Committee negatived ; the Report of Amendments to be received on Monday next ; and Bill to be printed, as amended. (No. 147.)

QUESTION.

MALTA—WRECK INQUIRIES.

LORD MUSKERRY : I beg to ask Her Majesty's Government whether their attention has been drawn to the court of inquiry recently held at Malta, where the certificate of the chief officer of the steamship "Kingswell," Mr. E. J. Kemp, was suspended for six months, and his arrest for manslaughter was ordered and effected ; and whether, in consequence of the entire reversal of this judgment, owing to the ignorance of navigation displayed in the terms thereof, and also of the grave injustice placed upon Mr. Kemp, they would take the necessary steps so that such courts of inquiry at colonial possessions should have the benefit of the advice and assistance of two assessors having experience in the merchant service, as was stipulated by the Merchant Shipping Act of the United Kingdom, which was also adopted by the Indian Government.

THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (the Earl of DUDLEY) : The attention of Her Majesty's Government has been drawn to the circumstances to which the noble Lord refers connected

with the court of inquiry recently held at Malta into the collision between the steamship "Kingswell" and the Ottoman ship "Maria." Inquiries into shipping casualties instituted in her Majesty's colonies and British possessions abroad are held by courts appointed by the Governments of those colonies and possessions, and the provisions of the local Acts which govern the constitution of such courts already require, generally, the appointment of two assessors having experience in the merchant service, as in the case of inquiries held in the United Kingdom. The Board of Trade are already in communication, through the Colonial Office, with the different Colonial Governments, with a view to assimilate as far as possible the procedure of wreck inquiries with that prescribed by the Imperial Act.

House adjourned at Eight of the clock,
to Thursday next, half-past Ten of
the clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 27th June 1899.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

BARTON-ON-SEA WATER BILL [Lords].

Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

GROSVENOR CHAPEL (LONDON) BILL [Lords].

HAMPSTEAD CHURCH (EMMANUEL, WEST END) BILL [Lords].

Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment.

LANARKSHIRE (MIDDLE WARD DISTRICT) WATER BILL [Lords].

Read the third time, and passed, with amendments.

INVERNESS HARBOUR BILL [Lords] (by Order).

As amended, considered; a clause added; an Amendment made; Bill to be read the third time.

OYSTERMOUTH RAILWAY OR TRAM-ROAD BILL [Lords].

Read a second time, and committed.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 14) BILL.

As amended, considered; read the third time, and passed.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 9) BILL [Lords].

Read a second time and committed.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 15) BILL.

Ordered, That the Order for re-committal be read, and discharged; That the Bill be re-committed to a Select Committee of Five Members, Three to be nominated by the House, and Two by the Committee of Selection.

Ordered, That all Petitions against the Bill presented not later than five clear days before the meeting of the Committee be referred to the Committee.

Ordered, That such of the Petitioners as pray to be heard by themselves, their counsel, agents, or witnesses, be heard on their Petitions against the Bill, if they think fit, and counsel heard in support of the Bill.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That Three be the quorum.—
(*Mr. T. W. Russell.*)

WEST METROPOLITAN RAILWAY BILL.

Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 17) BILL.

Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill, as amended, to be considered Tomorrow.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 3) BILL,

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES PROVISIONAL ORDER (BORROWSTOUNNESS) BILL,

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 6) BILL [Lords],
without Amendment.

**ST. JAMES'S AND PALL MALL
ELECTRIC LIGHT BILL,**

with an Amendment.

Amendments to

**HASTINGS AND ST. LEONARDS GAS
BILL [Lords],**

without amendment.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to authorise the Corporation of Hastings to enter into Agreements with the Hastings Harbour Commissioners to guarantee the payment by the Corporation of interest upon capital for the completion of Hastings Harbour; to provide for the transfer of the Harbour Undertaking to the Corporation; and for other purposes." [Hastings Harbour Bill [Lords].

HASTINGS HARBOUR BILL [Lords].

Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

EAST INDIA (CONTAGIOUS DISEASES).

Petition from Bedminster, against State regulation; to lie upon the Table.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND)
ACT (1894) AMENDMENT BILL.**

Petition from Stirling, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

**POOR LAW AMENDMENT (SCOTLAND)
ACT, 1845.**

Petition from Carlisle, for alteration of law; to lie upon the Table.

**POOR LAW RELIEF (DISFRANCHISE-
MENT).**

Petition from Tynemouth, for alteration of law; to lie upon the Table.

**PRIVATE BILL LEGISLATION (MUNI-
CIPAL TRADING).**

Petition of the Federation of Grocers' Associations, for inquiry by a Select Committee; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF FOOD AND DRUGS BILL.

Petition from Tenbury, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

**SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON
SUNDAY BILL.**

Petition from Dukinfield, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

**TUBERCULOSIS (INTERNATIONAL
CONGRESS).**

Copy presented, of Report of the Right Hon. Sir Herbert Maxwell, Baronet, M.P., F.R.S., and P. H. Pye-Smith, Esq., M.D., F.R.S., the Delegates of Her Majesty's Government at the International Congress on Tuberculosis, held at Berlin on the 24th to the 27th May, 1899 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

**TRAMWAYS ORDERS CONFIRMATION
(No. 1) BILL.**

Copy ordered, "of Memorandum stating the nature of the Proposals contained in the Provisional Orders included in the Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 247.]

**GAS AND WATER ORDERS CONFIR-
MATION BILL.**

Copy ordered, "of Memorandum stating the nature of the Proposals contained in the Provisional Orders included in the Gas and Water Orders Confirmation Bill."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 248.]

**GAS ORDERS CONFIRMATION (No. 1)
BILL.**

Copy ordered, "of Memorandum stating the nature of the Proposals contained in the Provisional Orders included in the Gas Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 249.]

**GAS ORDERS CONFIRMATION (No. 2)
BILL.**

Copy ordered, "of Memorandum stating the nature of the Proposals contained in the Provisional Orders included in the Gas Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 250.]

QUESTIONS.

KEYHAM YARD POLICE BARRACKS.

MR. WOODS (Essex, Walthamstow): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether joiners are being engaged, under the Government Work Department, on the new police barracks now in course of erection in the Keyham Yard, Devonport, at the rate of 4s. per day, although the rate of wages in the district, paid to joiners, is at the rate of 5s. 10d. per day; whether local contractors tendered at a rate of wages which exceeded the estimate of the Department; and whether, in view of the Fair Wages Resolution of the House of Commons of February, 1891, he will cause an inquiry to be made into the matter with a view of giving satisfaction.

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): No joiners are employed on this building, but I imagine that the hon. Member intends to refer to the case of two men who applied to be entered as labourers. They have been employed on scaffolding and other rough carpentry, and if found competent will no doubt be advanced to a higher rate of pay. Rates of wages were not stated in the contractors' tenders.

COMMANDS AT NAVAL BASES.

SIR JOHN COLOMB (Yarmouth): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War to state the names of the naval bases and coaling stations at which officers of other arms of the Service previously in command have been superseded in that command by conferring upon the officers of Royal Engineers, junior to them, local rank, on the ground that important building works necessitating heavy expenditure of public money are under consideration, and that the senior officer should therefore belong to the Royal Engineers; and, further, to state to what arms of the Service the officers thus superseded in command at each place respectively belonged.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (MR. WYNDHAM, Dover): In order to give the information asked for by the hon. and gallant Member it will be necessary to check the seniority lists at a number of stations. I must, therefore, ask him to defer it until Thursday. May

I point out that questions involving considerable research on the part of the military staff at the War Office can be answered on the day of their first appearance on the paper only by withdrawing a number of officers from the work upon which they are engaged.

THE MILITIA ESTABLISHMENT.

MR. R. G. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the yearly diminution of men serving in the Militia, and that that force is now 20,000 men below its authorised establishment, he will cause an inquiry to be made on the subject, with power to consider whether drilling the Militia recruits in small batches at dépôts is as desirable as the old system of drilling them under their own officers at their own headquarters, and to inquire if the pay of the Militia whilst out for training should be assimilated to that of the Line, as was once the case, and into the desirability of reverting to the old system of paying the first year's bounty, namely, 10s. on the recruit being attested and £1 at the end of the first training, and not, as at present, the whole 30s. bounty at the end of the first training.

MR. WYNDHAM: The failure to keep the Militia up to its establishment is recognised by the Secretary of State to be a matter requiring careful consideration. The suggestions put forward by the hon. Member are among those to which attention is being directed.

THE DUM-DUM BULLET.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India how soon he will be able to lay papers upon the Table of the House giving the grounds on which the Dum-Dum bullet used in recent Indian campaigns was adopted, particulars of experiments on animals carried out before it was decided to issue the bullet to troops, the surgical reports as to effect of bullet on the human body, particulars of experiments now being conducted with the new bullet which is to be substituted for the Dum-Dum, and Professor Brims' experiments with the Tübingen bullet; and whether he will procure specimens of the original Dum-Dum, Tübingen bullet, and the bullet which it is proposed to substitute for the Dum-Dum in India, and have them placed

in the tea-room for the inspection of Members.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): In reply to the first part of the question, the papers which I undertook to give have been some days in print and will shortly be circulated, but they relate only to experiments with the Dum-Dum bullet. An inspection of bullets such as is suggested would be quite useless, as no one by looking at a bullet before it is fired can estimate the injury it may inflict when fired.

MR. DILLON: Will the noble Lord be good enough to consider this point: that it has been denied that the bullet experimented upon was the Dum-Dum? I think if it were placed for inspection in the tea-room Members would be able to say whether it was the same bullet or not as that used in India.

LORD G. HAMILTON: I very much doubt whether the hon. Gentleman could. Certainly anyone with a knife could convert the ordinary bullet into a Dum-Dum bullet in a very few seconds.

CONGO STATE—BAHR-EL-GHAZEL.

SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, according to the latest information in the possession of the Government, Congolese forces are still outside the enclave of Lado; and whether Her Majesty's Government have yet come to a decision as to the future of the Anglo-Egyptian sphere in the neighbourhood of the Bahr-el-Ghazel.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): If by the "enclave of Lado" the right hon. Member means that portion of the territory leased to the Congo State by Great Britain, which is bounded on the north by 5 deg. 30 min. N. and on the west by 30 deg. E., Her Majesty's Government have no reason to think that there are any Congolese forces in the portions of the Nile basin outside that "enclave." The question of the future of the Anglo-Egyptian sphere in the neighbourhood of the Bahr-el-Ghazel is under the consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

BUNDER ABBAS.

SIR HENRY MEYSEY-THOMPSON (Staffordshire, Handsworth): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Her Majesty's Government have an agent on the Persian littoral of the Persian Gulf; and, if so, whether they have received, or are expecting to receive, any information from him concerning the reported lease for a term of years to the Russian Government of the port of Bunder Abbas.

MR. BRODRICK: Yes; Her Majesty has a Consul-General at Bushire. Her Majesty's Government have not received, and do not expect to receive, from that officer any confirmation of the report in question.

NEWFOUNDLAND FISHERIES.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Her Majesty's Government has received any intelligence as to the dispute stated to have arisen between Commodore Giffard, R.N., and the French naval commander on the coast of Newfoundland with reference to the taking of bait by United States vessels along the French shore, or with reference to the supply of bait to such vessels; and whether he can make any statement on the subject.

MR. BRODRICK: No difficulties have arisen, so far as Her Majesty's Government are aware, as to the supply of bait to United States vessels along the French shore.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Have any difficulties at all arisen on the French shore?

No answer was given.

AUSTRALASIAN FEDERATION.

MR. HOGAN (Tipperary, Mid): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he contemplates any specific course of action in regard to the introduction of a Bill enabling the Australian Colonies to organise themselves into a Federated Australian Commonwealth, in view of the fact that all the obstacles to federal union have now been removed.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): I hope that the Bill

may be received in time to be introduced at the beginning of the next session.

GOVERNMENT POLICY IN THE TRANSVAAL.

SIR ELLIS ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (Sheffield, Ecclesall): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can now inform the House what steps Her Majesty's Government propose to take in order to secure redress of the grievances of the Uitlanders of the Transvaal and to maintain British predominance in South Africa.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I must refer my hon. friend to a previous answer to the effect that Her Majesty's Government would wait for the reports of the Conference and for Sir A. Milner's despatches before deciding on the next step in their policy.

SIR E. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Does the right hon. Gentleman mean us to understand that the reports and despatches have not yet been received?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: They certainly have not yet been received.

MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can state approximately what number of Uitlanders in the South African Republic have the right to exercise the franchise for the first Volksraad now, and what number would have it presuming the conditions were the same as in the Orange Free State; and if he could state what number would receive it within a reasonable time under Sir Alfred Milner's proposals, and how this would compare with the latest proposals of President Kruger.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I am not in a position to give these figures, but I will endeavour to obtain the information.

MR. LAMBERT: When may we expect it?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Well, I shall have to communicate with Sir A. Milner—perhaps this day week.

MR. LAMBERT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if opportunity has been afforded to any representative of the British Government of

authenticating the signatures to the petition expressing confidence in the Transvaal Government, and alleged to have been signed by 23,000 Uitlanders, referred to in No. 88 [C. 9345]; if so, have the signatures been examined, and have they been found to be genuine.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The answer is in the negative.

TINTERN ABBEY.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the Department of Woods and Forests is negotiating with the Duke of Beaufort for the purchase of Raglan Castle and Tintern Abbey; whether, in that case, it is on the ground of their beauty and interest, or for the purpose of the utilisation of the surrounding estates as timber land; and whether the land is immediately contiguous to existing Crown estates.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS-BEACH, Bristol, W.): The answer to the first paragraph of the question is yes. The object is to make a profitable investment of capital. The Raglan estate is chiefly an agricultural estate, but there is a great deal of woodland on the Tintern estate, and both properties are in the near neighbourhood of the Crown estates of Dean Forest and Highmeadow.

MR. FLAVIN: Will the right hon. Gentleman say what advantage this estate has over the Herbert estate at Killarney that Government money should be used in purchasing it?

SIR M. HICKS-BEACH: We have no reason to suppose that the Killarney estate would be a profitable investment.

RATES (NON-PAYMENT) (SCOTLAND) RETURN.

SIR CHARLES CAMERON (Glasgow, Bridgeton): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether his attention has been called to the fact disclosed in the newly issued Return, Rates (Non-Payment) (Scotland), that, while in Glasgow, 8,500 persons were in 1898 removed from the Parliamentary register in respect of failure to pay rates, the number so removed in Greenock was 3,960, being in proportion to the respective populations concerned more than four times as many; whether

the system of enforcing payment of rates in Greenock differs from that pursued in Glasgow; and how many of the 3,960 persons disfranchised in Greenock for failure to pay rates before 20th June, 1898, paid their rates within three months subsequently to that date, and in how many cases do the rates in question still remain unpaid.

***THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire):** As regards the first part of the hon. Member's question my attention is now called to the matter for the first time. As regards the second part, I understand, on inquiry, that Glasgow begins to enforce payment of rates in January of each year by the employment of eight officers, but Greenock does not begin to enforce payment of rates by warrant until March or April in each year by the employment of one or two sheriff officers. As regards the third part, the figures are 135 and 3,550.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he is aware that the recently issued Return, Rates (Non-Payment) (Scotland), shows that 2,688 electors in Ross and Cromarty were removed from the Parliamentary register in the year 1898 in respect of non-payment of rates, 1,512 of these being in the Island of Lewis alone; and will he state whether the collectors of rates attended personally on specified dates in each parish to receive payment; and, if so, how were the visits notified.

***MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY:** I believe that the fact is as stated in the first paragraph of the question. The attendances of the collectors are matters of regulation in each of the 33 parishes of the county, and as they do not fall within the arrangements made either by the Scottish Office or the Local Government Board I have no definite information on the subject.

SCHOOL SANITATION IN SCOTLAND.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the attention of the Secretary for Scotland has been called to the Education Report for the Northern Division of Scotland for the year 1898, in which, speaking of hygiene, one of Her Majesty's chief inspectors says that sufficient attention is not paid to the provision in schools of a suitable water supply and

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the regular and thorough cleansing of offices, and, further, that the drainage is not attended to, with the result that there are periodical epidemics; and will he state whether any steps have been taken to remedy these defects.

***MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY:** The matter referred to is one which properly belongs to the sanitary authorities; and while there is reason to think that in many cases there has been considerable deficiency, the increased attention given to these defects has led to improvement in many places. My Lords trust that the remarks of the chief inspector will stimulate that attention.

PORTMAHOMACK HARBOUR.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate, in view of the statement made by the President of the Board of Trade in regard to Treasury assistance for harbour accommodation around the coasts of the United Kingdom, will he state on what ground the Secretary for Scotland declines to approach the Treasury for a grant in aid of the improvement of Portmahomack Harbour; and is he aware that the County Council of the County of Ross and Cromarty is strongly in favour of this improvement being effected.

***MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY:** It is true that the County Council have recently recommended a grant of public funds towards the improvement of Portmahomack Harbour. The Secretary for Scotland, however, is not satisfied that the case is so urgent as to warrant his submitting it to the Treasury as a fitting subject for a special grant, especially as he has not yet heard that any local contributions are forthcoming. I am to add that within the last few years Government has spent £9,271 in the improvement of four fishing piers and harbours within 11 miles of Portmahomack.

PEDDIESTON PUBLIC SCHOOL.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he will state whether the Peddieston Public School, and the farm towns of Ardivall and Muirton (Black Isle), have yet been provided with a suitable supply of water.

***MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY:** I am informed by the Local Government Board that the District Clerk states that the

excavation of the track for laying the pipes to conduct the water to the places mentioned by the hon. Member is finished, and that the completion of the contract is delayed owing to the non-delivery of material, which, however, is expected this week.

STORNOWAY PRISON.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate, having regard to the fact that at a recent meeting of the Ross and Cromarty County Council the Scottish Office proposal to discontinue the Stornoway Prison and convert it into licensed police cells was strongly condemned, will he state whether the Secretary for Scotland has yet been able to see his way to abandon the proposal.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: The matter referred to is still under consideration of the Secretary for Scotland.

NORTHERN LIGHTHOUSE COMMISSION.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade why, in default of any seafaring members, the Northern Lighthouse Commission has no nautical adviser attached to its staff; who is responsible for the specifying, engineering, and superintendence of its steamers, their repairs and alterations, and more particularly for the recent large expenditure of £18,000 on the old lighthouse tender "Pharos," which, after repair, is reported to be worth only a few thousands more than that amount; why the Commission has not, like the Trinity House and the Irish Lighthouse Board, a scientific adviser on all scientific matters pertaining to lighthouse service; and whether there is any photometric or other accurate test made of the power of the lights governed by the Northern Lighthouse Commissioners as a guarantee of the accuracy of the statements in the Admiralty List of Lights.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): The Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses have not thought it necessary to have a special nautical adviser, as all their proceedings involving nautical consideration are subject to the approval of the Trinity House and the control of the Board of Trade. The Commissioners are respon-

sible for the specifying, engineering, and superintendence of repairs and alterations of their steamers, in which they have the assistance of the Board of Trade Surveyors. The Commissioners take the advice of their engineer, Mr. Stevenson, on scientific matters, while all their proposals have to be submitted for approval to the Trinity House, as well as to the Board of Trade. I am informed by the Commissioners that accurate tests on a photometric method are made of the lights under their jurisdiction.

CROYDE COASTGUARD STATION— TELEPHONIC COMMUNICATION.

SIR CAMERON GULL (Devon, Barnstaple): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the evidence recently given at the Board of Trade Inquiry at Barnstaple into the wreck, accompanied with loss of life, of the ketch "Joseph and Thomas," at Saunton, in April last, as to the want of telephonic communication between the look-out at Croyde and the coastguard station there, a distance of one mile; and also as to the absence of a direct through telephonic communication between Croyde and the other coastguard stations and West Appledore; and whether, having regard to the dangerous nature of that part of the coast, he will communicate with the proper authorities with a view of having these defects remedied at the earliest possible moment.

MR. RITCHIE: Yes, Sir, my attention has been called to the case to which my hon. friend refers, and I have been in communication with the Admiralty and Post Office on the subject. I am informed that the Post Office will take steps to provide telephonic communication between the look-out at Baggy Point and the Coastguard buildings at Croyde, and that they will also consider whether an arrangement can be made to enable the Coastguard at Croyde to communicate direct with the Coastguard at Appledore.

BRITISH MERCANTILE MARINE.

MR. R. G. WEBSTER: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether a Departmental Committee is now sitting to inquire into the causes relating to the progressive diminution in numbers of British sailors in the mercantile marine, and the great increase of

foreigners certified as pilots competent to navigate vessels into British ports and harbours; whether the power of suggesting remedies for this condition of affairs comes within the scope of their terms of reference; and when this Committee will probably issue a report.

MR. RITCHIE: I think my hon. friend is under some misapprehension, for no such Committee as that to which he refers is now sitting.

MR. R. G. WEBSTER: Does the right hon. Gentleman propose to inquire into this question?

MR. RITCHIE: I do not propose any further inquiry.

COMMUNICATION ON PASSENGER TRAINS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, having regard to the fact that the Committee of Railway General Managers have for a long time past had under consideration the question of an efficient means of communication on all passenger trains between the passenger and the guard, will he state whether any efforts have been made to obtain a speedy decision on the subject.

MR. RITCHIE: I have communicated from time to time with the railway companies on the subject referred to by the hon. Member. The general managers have not yet come to an agreement among themselves as to the most suitable appliance.

POSTMEN'S GOOD CONDUCT STRIPES.

MR. LUCAS-SHADWELL (Hastings): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster-General, whether all full-time duty, viz., eight hours per day, performed by men upon postal duties previous to their receiving postmen's appointments, will be counted as full time for good conduct stripes.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. HANBURY, Preston): Full time adult service in an unestablished capacity, other than that of learner, is allowed to reckon towards good conduct stripes in the case of established postmen.

BONDED VAULTS AND WAREHOUSES.

MR. STEADMAN (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I beg to ask the Secretary to

the Treasury if he will explain the reason why some bonded vaults and warehouses situated in the Port of London, and under the control of Her Majesty's Customs Department, are permitted to remain open for nine hours per day all the year through without the proprietors being called upon to pay any overtime charges, while other bonded vaults and warehouses similarly situated and under the same control are only permitted to be open for seven hours a day in winter (four months in the year) and eight hours in summer, unless the proprietors are charged overtime for the Customs officers' attendance beyond these hours; and whether this important privilege has been granted at the request of the proprietors of the warehouses concerned.

MR. HANBURY: None of the vaults or warehouses referred to are allowed to remain open for nine hours a day all the year through, as a regular rule, either with overtime or without. On sufficient cause being shown, however, arrangements are made for keeping open a warehouse as occasion may require; and there are about 50 stations in London at which warehouses are usually open in this way. In such cases overtime charges are always required both for the "superintendent locker" and for occasional visits of inspection by a surveyor. Whether any overtime is paid to the Customs representative at the warehouse depends on several circumstances. If the warehouse can be left in charge of a watcher, overtime is not required unless either the watcher is required to give a total attendance in excess of that covered by his regular weekly wage or a duty is assigned to the watcher not in direct connection with his ordinary daily employment. In all cases where a watcher is left in charge the business to be transacted is of a simple character.

SPECIAL LEAVE IN THE POST OFFICE.

MR. STEADMAN (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster-General, if he is aware that different surveyors and postmasters place different interpretations upon the instructions issued in February, and supplemented by further order in April, on the question of special leave without deduction from wages to the extent of three days in any one year; and if he will

cause fresh and more explicit instructions to be issued, and make them known to the staff through the weekly official circular.

MR. HANBURY: The instruction referred to must be that issued in April, 1891. It allows special leave with full pay up to a maximum of three days "in case of death or urgent distress at home, or other exceptional circumstances," and leaves the number of days up to three to be fixed at the discretion of the postmaster. No case in which misunderstanding has arisen has been reported to the Postmaster-General. If the hon. Member can inform me of any case I will cause inquiry to be made.

INCE COLLIERY ACCIDENT.

MR. WOODS: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been called to the statements made by Mr. Matthews, inspector of mines, and Mr. Brighouse, the county coroner, at an inquest held on Saturday last at Ince, near Wigan, into the cause of the death of a collier named Joseph Almond, who was killed at a colliery at Ince through the imperfect timbering of the working place; whether he is aware that the coroner stated that with his fifteen years' experience he had come to the conclusion that they ought not to allow the responsibility of timbering to remain with the collier, and if the colliery owners would not voluntarily do what they ought to do to protect life the Legislature must step in and make them, also that both the inspector of mines and the jury in their verdict recommended systematic timbering of mines; and whether, in view of these expressions of opinion and with the object of preventing this large class of accidents in mines, he will issue a Provisional Order to the colliery owners or introduce legislation on the subject.

COLONEL BLUNDELL (Lancashire, Ince): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman the following question, of which I have given him private notice: Whether it was not proved at the inquest that there was plenty of available timber at the place where the general and special rules required that the management should place it; whether it was not one of the special rules of the colliery that the workman should himself see to the safety of the roof and sides of his working-

place; and whether, as the roof of a mine varies, "systematic timbering" has as yet been accepted by mining engineers as a safer system than that existing.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir M. WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): I have received a report of the inquest in this case, and find therein statements to the effect indicated by the hon. Member. The question of what can be done to prevent accidents from falls of roof and sides has been under the consideration of myself and the inspectors of mines for some time past. I have no power under the Mines Acts to issue any "Provisional Order" on the subject; but in some districts owners have themselves adopted special rules requiring additional precautions to be taken—among others that of systematic timbering—and I have decided to bring the matter specially to the notice of colliery owners throughout the country in the hope of securing the adoption of further precautions. In answer to my hon. friend the Member for the Ince Division of Lancashire, I would say that there does not appear to have been any evidence given at the inquest of disregard of either the general or the special rules in force at the mine, but I understand the jury's recommendation to be that the rules should be so altered as to require systematic timbering. As regards the third of my hon. friend's questions, the mines inspectors report unanimously to me that much greater safety is secured by systematic timbering.

PENGE MAGISTRATES AND ANTI-VACCINATIONISTS.

MR. THOMAS BAYLEY (Derbyshire, Chesterfield): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether he is aware that Mr. George James Gilbert on 14th June was refused an exemption under the Vaccination Act of 1898 by Mr. J. Judd and Dr. Hetley, two justices sitting at the Penge Police Court, who told the applicant that to have a conscientious objection you must have a thorough knowledge of vaccination in its relation to small-pox, and that if he brought a medical certificate to say that his child is not in a fit condition to be vaccinated they might accept that; and whether he will take steps to inform the Penge magistrates,

and magistrates generally throughout the country, that they are exceeding their powers in refusing exemptions on such grounds.

SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY : I am informed by the Clerk to the Penge Magistrates that the first paragraph of the question does not give an accurate account of the remarks made by the justices on the occasion referred to, and that as a matter of fact the applicant did not state, as required by the statute, that he conscientiously believed that vaccination would be prejudicial to the health of the child in question, while the suggestion of a medical certificate was made by way of informing the applicant of the provision of the law that, if a child, even though not exempted under the Act of 1898, is at any time certified by a doctor to be unfit for vaccination the vaccination officer may accept the certificate and refrain from vaccinating the child for the time being. I do not see any need for such action on my part as the hon. Member suggests.

WEST HAM WARDS.

SIR CHARLES DILKE : I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether Mr. Chester Jones, as Home Office Commissioner for the division of the borough of West Ham into wards, is now holding any kind of inquiry at the office of a local private solicitor in West Ham; and whether he will explain to the House the circumstances under which steps towards the division of the borough into new wards are being taken through a private solicitor rather than through the municipality.

SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY : The facts of the case are shortly as follows. On the 21st of July, 1898, the Privy Council Office forwarded to the Home Office an Order in Council altering the number of wards in West Ham. It thereupon became my duty to appoint a Commissioner to prepare a scheme to determine the boundaries of the wards and apportion the councillors among them. This was done; and later in the year, at the request of the Town Council, I authorised the Commissioner to postpone action till after the Council election in November. The new Council were opposed to any alteration of the wards, and petitioned the Privy Council to take no further steps in the matter. The Commissioner was directed

to hold his hand still further, pending the decision on the Town Council's petition. The matter was carefully considered, and the Privy Council and the Home Office concurred in the inexpediency of reversing the Order in Council. It was therefore necessary that the inquiry by the Commissioner should proceed. The Town Council repeatedly refused to afford the Commissioner the usual facilities, and he was obliged to find his own means of executing his duty. For this purpose he hired a room which was placed at his disposal by a solicitor, unconnected with the matter in dispute, and has used it after full notice to all concerned for the purpose of making such inquiries as are necessary.

TITHE RENT-CHARGE (RATES) BILL.

SIR H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture in what manner the estimate of £87,000, which he stated would be the charge upon the Local Taxation Account arising under the Tithe Rent-charge (Rates) Bill, was arrived at.

***THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. LONG, Liverpool, West Derby):** The commutation value of the rent-charges payable to parochial incumbents was £2,412,000, and taking into account the reduction of this amount owing to the fall in the corn averages and making allowance for the deductions made in arriving at the net rateable value it appeared unlikely that the net rateable value of the property included within the Bill would exceed £1,400,000. In consultation with the Local Government Board we thought it safe to assume that the rates in respect of which relief is given in the Bill would average about 2s. 6d. in the pound, which gave us £175,000 as the total of the rates paid, one moiety of which is the £87,500 of which I made mention when introducing the Bill. For the convenience of hon. Members I have put copies of this answer in the Vote Office.

MR. LAMBERT : I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether any, if so, what, reduction is now allowed on the gross value of tithe rent-charge for rateable purposes; and what rates are referred to in Clause 4 of the Tithe Rent-charge (Rates) Bill by the words "except

any rate which the owner of tithe rent-charge is liable, as compared with the occupier of buildings, to be assessed to or to pay in proportion of one-half or less than one-half."

*MR. LONG: The principal deductions usually allowed in arriving at the net rateable value of tithe rent-charge are the expenses of collection, including law expenses, a deduction on account of bad debts, first fruits, tenths and other ecclesiastical dues, and all usual tenants' rates and taxes. The rates referred to in Clause 4 of the Bill are those in which the owner of tithe rent-charge has already been placed by Parliament in a more favourable position than that in which it is proposed to place him under the Bill, of which the rates levied under the Public Health Act and the Lighting and Watching Acts are the most conspicuous examples.

MR. LAMBERT: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture what is the amount of rates levied on tithe rent-charge attached to a benefice, and not attached to a benefice; and what is the reason for not proposing the same relief from rates for both the classes of tithe rent-charge.

*MR. LONG: So far as I am aware there is at present no difference in the amount of the rates levied on tithe rent-charge attached to a benefice and tithe rent-charge not so attached. Our view is, however, that the conditions of tenure and statutory obligations present in the two cases render it equitable to make a distinction between them, and hence the limitation set out in the Bill.

MR. SAMUEL EVANS (Glamorgan-shire, Mid): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer when he intends to propose an Amendment to Standing Order 62, in pursuance of the pledge he gave, or in fulfilment of the hope he held out, to the House on the 23rd June, 1896, in order to ensure that a Resolution of the House in Committee shall precede a Bill which intercepts public funds; and whether it is intended to proceed with the Tithe Rent-charge (Rates) Bill without such a Resolution having been first passed in Committee.

SIR M. HICKS-BEACH: I gave no pledge on this matter; but, in pursuance of what I said at the time named, I

placed on the Paper notice of an Amendment of the Standing Order. I found that it would be opposed, and was unable to find time to proceed with it. But if such an Amendment had been passed it would not have affected the Tithe Rent-charge (Rates) Bill. That Bill does not intercept any revenue; the revenue with which it deals is already intercepted by law, and paid into the local taxation account.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Is this an interception of an interception?

SIR M. HICKS-BEACH: No, Sir.

MR. SAMUEL EVANS: Does the right hon. Gentleman propose to move the Amendment?

SIR M. HICKS-BEACH: I do not think it worth while troubling the House with it.

MR. SAMUEL EVANS: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture if he can state to the House what is the total number of the owners of tithe rent-charge attached to benefices of the Church of England in England and Wales; what is the total gross annual value of such tithe rent-charge; and what is the total annual income of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners of England and Wales.

*MR. LONG: The total number of owners of tithe rent-charge attached to a benefice in England and Wales is between ten and eleven thousand. The present total gross annual value of such tithe rent-charge is approximately £1,688,000. With regard to the annual income of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, I would ask the hon. Member to allow me to refer him to the Report recently presented by those Commissioners to Parliament, which contains very full details on the subject.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he will lay upon the Table a Return of the cases in which, the tithes having been compounded on the basis of the tithe-payers paying the rates, such additions were made to the composition under the Tithe Commutation Act, 1836, as would be equivalent to the rates paid; and also showing the relative amount of the present rate, as compared with the amount of the rate at the period of such addition.

*MR. LONG: Of course, I have given this question very careful consideration. I very much regret that I cannot comply with the request of the right hon. Gentleman. Although I very much sympathise with the desire for such a Return, I regret that the information required is not available. It would be almost impossible to get the information sought in the last paragraph.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that these very facts have been in consecutive years presented to Parliament and are in print, and that all that is necessary is to collect them? Is he aware that these very facts have been presented to Parliament for a period extending over some ten years? All I am asking for is that they shall be embodied in one Return.

*MR. LONG: As I read the question of the right hon. Gentleman, I thought he desired a Return showing how many cases were compounded under the Act of 1836, and how many were not so dealt with. As the right hon. Gentleman knows, the variations in these cases is very considerable, and the labour involved in the preparation of such a Return very great. But if I have misapprehended the question, I shall gladly consider the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I would ask the right hon. Gentleman to look at these Returns. They give every single case where there has been a composition. I only want information already in print put in a consolidated form.

KILLADROY LOAN FUND BANK.

MR. FLAVIN: On behalf of the hon. Member for South Monaghan, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Killadroy (County Tyrone) Loan Fund Bank, two years ago, was converted into a private bank; that, at that time, a sum of £800 of accumulated savings remained to its credit, while the uncollected debts amounted to £570; and that the officials at the recent Government inquiry promised a portion of this money would be distributed for charitable purposes; and will he state what steps have been taken by the Dublin Loan Fund Board to have effect given to that promise.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (MR. G. W. BALFOUR, Leeds,

Central): I am informed by the Loan Fund Board that it is not the fact that the Killadroy Loan Fund Society has ceased to exist as a registered society. The Board, in January last, received from the officers of the society their statutable report for the year 1898. It appears, however, that in December last the inspector reported to the Board that one of the officials of the society had opened a private bank. The inspector reported to the Board in 1897 that the society's accumulated savings stood at £830, of which the sum of £700 was due by persons to whom loans had been issued. In the opinion of the Board this sum of £830 cannot be held as having remained to the credit of the society in 1897, as the great bulk of the amount was outstanding, mostly in overdue loans. It is not true that any promise was made by an official on the occasion of the recent Commission of Inquiry to the effect stated in the question.

IRISH DISTRICT COUNCILS AND LEGAL WORK.

MR. FLAVIN: On behalf of the hon. Member for South Monaghan I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state whether it is open to district councils in Ireland to engage for the performance of the legal work of their districts solicitors who are members of the county council of their county.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: This is an abstract question, upon which it is undesirable to express an opinion; but I may say that I think the employment of a solicitor under the circumstances mentioned comes within the scope of the evils sought to be guarded against by Article 12 of the Application of Enactments Order of the 22nd December last.

CLAREMORRIS WATER SCHEME.

MR. DAVITT (Mayo, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Local Government Board has ordered the cost of a proposed water scheme for Claremorris to be borne by the entire rural district of which the town is a part; whether he is aware that the people resident in the town are willing to bear the expense of providing themselves with water; whether, seeing that the rural ratepayers, some of whom reside ten miles away, will derive no benefit from the

scheme, the Board has taken any steps to consult the representatives of the ratepayers before deciding to make the water scheme a union instead of a town charge; and whether a protest from the Rural District Council against this action of the Local Government Board in this matter has been received by him.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: The statements in this question are generally correct. The chargeability of rural sanitary expenses over the entire rural district, or in some cases over the dispensary district, has been carried out in pursuance of a general principle which it was deemed necessary to adopt in consequence of the rating provisions of the Local Government Act of last session, and which has been assented to by the majority of the boards of guardians in Ireland. As I have already explained, I am unwilling to depart from that principle unless a very clear case for doing so can be made out. I am, however, prepared to look further into any cases of alleged serious hardship.

CASTLREEA WATERWORKS.

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the great discontent which has been caused amongst the ratepayers of the Castlerea rural district by the order of the Local Government Board making the charge for waterworks near Castlerea and Ballaghalerin a district charge; and whether under the circumstances he will advise the Local Government Board to reconsider its decision in this matter.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: This question has reference to a class of case to which the hon. Member for South Mayo has directed my attention in a question to which I have just replied. My reply to the hon. Member for South Mayo is equally applicable to the present question.

DRUNKENNESS IN SCOTLAND.

MR. PIRIE (Aberdeen, N.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if his attention has been drawn to the fact brought out by the Report of the Prison Commissioners for Scotland that the committals to prison in that country during 1898 have exceeded the average of the previous five years by more than 5,000, and that the Commissioners clearly attribute this fact to the habit of drinking to excess, which has increased among the

wage-earning classes to the point that it is designated in the Report as an epidemic of drunkenness; and whether, in view of these fresh facts, the Government can make some further statement as to their intention of introducing legislation to check the evil, in accordance with the preponderating wish of the Scottish people on that subject. I beg also to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he is aware that an examination was recently made at Barlinnie Prison, Glasgow, into the cases of 245 prisoners with longest sentences; that it was ascertained that 171 of these prisoners were under the influence of drink when their crime was committed, whilst only 74 were sober; and that 101 out of these 245 crimes were committed on Saturdays, compared to an average of 28 for the other six days of the week, thereby proving, as the above is a typical example, that Saturdays are not only the days on which offences under the head of drunkenness reach their maximum, but that it is also the day on which the maximum number of serious crimes are committed; and whether, seeing the Scottish Members are at present unable to obtain special legislation to counteract a state of matters so injurious to the welfare of their country, the Government will give its attention to the matter.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I have no ground for doubting the facts to which the hon. Member calls attention in the question, although I must not be regarded as committing myself to the proposition that the increase in the number of convictions is due to an increase in drunkenness. I should imagine that the increased vigilance of the police has as much to do with it as anything, if not more. I cannot make any statement of policy on the part of the Government as suggested by the hon. Member in a subsequent question on the Paper.

MR. PIRIE: Are we to understand that we in Scotland are helpless in this matter?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir.

DR. CLARK (Caithness-shire): Has the right hon. Gentleman seen the Report of H.M. Inspector of Constabulary this year, and especially the last

clause? Will he, in view of that, consider the necessity for legislation?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have not seen the Report.

THE PEACE CONFERENCE AND THE DUM-DUM BULLET.

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether Sir John Ardagh recently read a paper at the Peace Conference setting forth the reasons why, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, the Dum-Dum bullet should not be condemned as an unlawful projectile; whether Sir John Ardagh was authorised to state that as the view still held by the British Government; whether the Dum-Dum bullet was condemned by a full meeting of the first Commission with only two dissentients; and, whether it is the intention of the Government to lay Papers giving a report of the proceedings of the Peace Conference, and to give the House an opportunity of discussing them before the end of this session.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As regards the first four paragraphs, I can really add nothing to what I said to the hon. Gentleman in reference to a previous question on the subject of the Peace Conference. Nothing can be communicated by the Government to the public until that Conference is over. As regards the last paragraph, no doubt Papers will be laid with reference to the Conference, but how soon they will be laid it would be impossible for me to say.

MR. DILLON: Since the right hon. Gentleman told us in answer to a previous question that the proceedings of the Conference were to be absolutely private, the delegates to the Conference have altered the rule, and allowed a considerable *résumé* to be published in the papers.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I was not aware of that fact, if a fact it be.

THE AGRICULTURE AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION (IRELAND) BILL.

MR. ARTHUR J. MOORE (London-derry): Will the First Lord of the Treasury say whether the Government seriously mean to pass the Irish Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Bill this session. It has already been mentioned in three Queen's Speeches, and yet although the end of the session is approaching, we have only had ten minutes

to discuss it. Does the right hon. Gentleman assent to granting facilities for the reasonable discussion of the Bill?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have already told the hon. Member or some of his friends that it was quite impossible to give any long time for the discussion of this Bill. If there is to be a lengthened discussion as regards this Bill, we shall, I fear, have to defer it to the next session.

MR. ARTHUR J. MOORE: You have not given us a chance to discuss the Bill.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. DILLON: What business does the right hon. Gentleman propose to take to-morrow as the first and second Orders?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The first Order will be the continuation of the Debate on the reference of the Telephone Bill to the Grand Committee, unless we are fortunate enough to get it to-night. The second order will be the Small Houses Bill.

NEW WRIT.

For the election of two Members for the Borough of Oldham, in the room of Robert Ascroft, Esq., deceased, and James Francis Oswald, Esq., Q.C. (Manor of Northstead).—(*Sir William Walrond.*)

REFORMATORY SCHOOLS AMENDMENT BILL [Lords].

Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 252.]

TITHE RENT-CHARGE (RATES) BILL.

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*MR. ASQUITH (Fife, E.): I rise for the purpose of moving the rejection of this Bill, which is presented this afternoon for the consideration of the House of Commons under conditions which I believe to be without a parallel in the longest Parliamentary memory. It is a measure as to which I am sanguine enough to hope that before I sit down I shall satisfy hon. Members on both sides

that it is of a highly contentious character. It was introduced last week, very near the end of the month of June, under the shelter of a Standing Order which curtails our accustomed liberty of discussion upon the implied understanding, hitherto scrupulously observed by both parties in the State, that it shall not be taken advantage of to smuggle into Parliamentary existence projects of controversial legislation. Four days, and only four days have elapsed, and, before the country has had time or opportunity to study or appreciate the provisions of the Bill, we are hurried into a Second Reading discussion of what everybody who is familiar even with the alphabet of the matter knows to be a most intricate and complicated subject. What is the measure in the interests of which Her Majesty's Government have felt themselves entitled to resort to this startling reversal of the established conventions and traditions of the House of Commons? Some of us have felt it to be our duty of late to invite the attention of the House and the country to a certain tardiness on the part of members of the present Administration in redeeming the legislative pledges on the strength of which they appealed to the electorate in 1895. That I am bound to say is not a reproach which can be fairly levelled against them in respect of this Bill. So far as I am aware neither by the machinery of election cards, nor by proposals on public platforms in the year 1895, was it brought home to the minds of the electorate of Manchester and Birmingham and other great urban communities that they were to give a mandate to the Unionist majority to appropriate a portion of the general tax revenue of the country to abolishing or reducing the rates paid by the clergy of the Established Church. Since then (that was in 1895) we have had no less than five Queen's Speeches—copious catalogues, most of them, of pious intentions, or, at least, of pious expectations; but I cannot recall that in any one of them this measure, or any measure of the kind, found a place. In 1896, when the Agricultural Rating Bill was under discussion, the clergy were deliberately and of set purpose, in so far as their incomes were derived from tithe rent-charge, excluded from the operation of that measure, and as lately as 1898 the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the course of the Budget Debate used language which,

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if it had any meaning at all, was certainly opposed to the principle, if principle it can be called, on which this measure is based. I ask, and I think I am entitled to ask, why at a time when a prudent Minister is beginning to consider the winding-up of the business of the session, in the very last week of June, this Bill has been suddenly sprung on the House of Commons? To that, as I venture to think very pertinent inquiry, only one answer has been or can be vouchsafed. A Royal Commission has made an interim Report. There is a good deal of obscurity about the origin of that Report. Its birth is shrouded in impenetrable, or at any rate in hitherto unpenetrated, mystery. Who was its true begetter? At whose suggestion and under what inspiration was it produced? These are points on which I hope we shall have a little light in the course of the present Debate. That Commission, as we all remember, was appointed—I think I may fairly say—in deference to complaints and arguments used upon this side of the House at the time of the Agricultural Rating Bill of 1896—that Commission was appointed with a mandate “to report whether all kinds of real and personal property contribute equitably to taxation raised for local purposes.” It is a rather startling paradox that the first-fruits of a Commission appointed for that purpose, before it can have ever heard or considered the grievances put forward by the various classes of ratepayers in this country, should have been to bring in an interim Report which selects another special class of ratepayers for privileged and preferential treatment. I have read, as I suppose most hon. Members have, with care and attention this interim Report. I must say in passing that it is a Report which gives no countenance whatever to the present proposals of the Government. Some 13 Commissioners, I believe, have signed a document in which they declare that the case of the clergy is one that requires special treatment, but only three have ventured to propose a specific remedy—namely, that the clergy should be allowed in respect of rent-charge a larger measure of deduction from rateable value than the present law permits, and that is a suggestion which the Government, I do not doubt for excellent reasons, have completely set aside. But what is this Report? I must say, speaking with all

possible deference of the owners of the very eminent names appended to it—some of whom, I shrewdly suspect, can have had very little to do with the composition of the text, and still less with the verification of the references—that it is one of the most superficial and, in important respects, one of the most misleading excursions into the domain of legal history which I have ever come across. Something like thirty-seven paragraphs out of little more than 100, or more than a third of this report, are taken up with an attempt, I will not say to prove, but to give probability to, a thesis which, as all lawyers know, is opposed to the uniform current of judicial decision in this country—namely, that until very recent times the clergy, in their character of recipients of tithes, were exempt from local burdens. I have rarely seen such a medley of crude and misplaced erudition. You have mutilated extracts from *Magna Charta*, citations from the unsuccessful arguments of counsel in cases in which the decision has gone against them, a long string of juristic fallacies and historical fancies which have been trenchantly exposed in the dissentient memorandum of the hon. Member for East Donegal. And all this farrago is pressed into the service as an authority to give some kind of archaeological basis, if I may use the expression, for the proposal to relieve the clergy at the expense of the general taxpayer. I am not going to follow the Commissioners into a technical discussion of the antiquities of tithe, but there are one or two broad historical facts which have an intimate and direct bearing upon the question the House is invited to consider, and which are so far removed from the domain of controversy, or even of suspicion, that even these Commissioners have not been able to ignore them. Tithes in their origin were a voluntary, and afterwards became a compulsory, contribution. They were appropriated in part, it is true, to the maintenance of the fabric of the church and to provide the stipends of the clergy, but in part, also, to the relief of poverty and suffering. That is the initial and fundamental fact with which we start in the history of tithe. It is quite true that, as time went on, the proportion which was appropriated by the clergy grew, while the proportion which was devoted to the relief of poverty and suffering dwindled,

and in some cases entirely disappeared. Down to the time of the Reformation, as the Commissioners themselves say in their Report, “the relief of the poor had been a legal charge, but undefined in amount, on the revenues of the secular clergy, aided by the money of the charitable foundations and the regular alms of the monasteries and religious houses.” That was the state of the law when Henry VIII. suppressed the monasteries, and the suppression of the monasteries diverted from the relief of the poor that large supplementary fund. Does not every student of history know that the sudden cessation of the relief produced such a strained economic condition that for something like half a century, from the end of the reign of Henry VIII. to the end of that of Elizabeth, Parliament was perpetually trying to readjust the new state of things created by the suppression of the monasteries to the necessities and needs of the poorer inhabitants of the country? The ultimate result of that legislation was the two Acts of 1597 and 1601, which form the basis of our modern Poor Law system, under which every inhabitant and every occupier of the parish was rendered liable to be rated to the relief of the poor, that rate being made a compulsory contribution, and under which I venture to say that, until this Report was produced, no competent student of history or of law entertained a moment’s doubt that the parochial clergy, in respect of tithes which are attached to a benefice as well as the lay owners in respect of tithes appropriated by the lay improvers, were liable to pay rates, and have paid rates practically without any breach of continuity. There never has been any doubt on that point, which was decided by the unanimous resolution of the Judges of England as far back as 1598. I mention these facts because they have an important bearing on what was done in 1836, when the uncertain payment was transformed into the commuted rent-charge which we know at the present day. So far as one is able to ascertain, although there was undoubtedly considerable variation in practice between different portions of the country, yet over a large part of the kingdom, some authorities say two-thirds and others three-fourths, prior to the passing of the Act of 1836 tithes had been compounded for by way of money payments, and the normal practice was that the tithe-payers,

the farmers of the parish, themselves paid the rates which were assessed in respect of the tithes, and handed over the balance of the agreed composition to the parson, who held it for his own use. The Act of 1836, the legislation which had to deal with that state of things, made two provisions. In the first place, it provided that where there had been a composition of this kind, where, in other words, the parson had received the net tithe, free from rates, for the purpose of the commuted tithe rent-charge, the average rates should be added to the composition and the combined sum should represent the tithe charge. And in the second place it provided, in the 69th section, acting in strict conformity with the unvarying practice and traditions of English law ever since we know of it in relation to this matter, that tithe rent-charge created by that Act shall be subject to rates and taxes, and when they said that they meant not merely the rates then in existence, but rates or taxes of any amount whatsoever which might hereafter by lawful authority be imposed. The result is that in the vast majority of cases the tithe rent-charge represents the composition plus the rates, and I think it is therefore obvious that, so far as rating is concerned, the tithe-owner, the recipient of the rent-charge, can only have suffered if the rates now payable are in excess of the average rates of the seven years prior to the date of commutation. Even if that were so, and if it could be shown that the rates now imposed exceed in amount the rates which then existed, no substantial injustice could, in my opinion, have been done, because every clergyman in this country who now holds a benefice has taken that benefice with a knowledge of the law, with his eyes open to the facts, and with a perfect understanding that the revenue he received from the tithe rent-charge, from the day of his induction, was a revenue which was liable to be diminished either if the rent-charge fell or the rates rose during the period of his incumbency. But it is not necessary to dwell upon that, because there is the best reason to believe that the rates now charged on the tithe rent-charge are, upon the average, in our rural districts considerably less than they were at the date of commutation. If you take the rural rates which existed in 1836 you will find that they were the poor, rate, the county rate, and the highway

rate. There was also the Church rate, which has now disappeared. Those rates, as we know, in the poorer parishes of the country often ran up to 9s. and 10s. in the pound; but if you take the average of the whole country for the nearest year of which we have accurate particulars—namely, 1827—they amounted to 3s. 8d. in the pound. What are the rates in the present day? You have the old rates, and you have added to them the police rate, and you have, of course, in many cases a rural sanitary rate and also a school board rate. And yet the total of these old and new rates added together in the rural parishes of the country cannot at this moment be said to exceed 2s. 4d. in the pound. The right hon. Gentleman opposite said, in reply to a question to-day, that the Government had placed them at 2s. 6d. for this purpose, but I do not know where they get the extra twopence from. I think I am right in saying that under the Agricultural Rating Act the contribution of the State has not, in fact, been at a higher rate than 2s. or 2s. 1d. in the pound. One may fairly say that, taking the lowest estimate at 2s., and the highest estimate at 2s. 6d., you are still at least 1s. 2d. short of the average in 1836. I think what I have said establishes three propositions. In the first place that tithe, both before and since it was commuted into the rent-charge, has always been subject to local rates; in the second place, that at the transformation which took place in 1836 the liability was expressly preserved and provided for; and thirdly, that so far as a comparison of the rates is concerned, the position is substantially better to-day—certainly it is not worse—than it was at the date of commutation. I am the last person to deny the existence on a lamentable scale of what is called clerical distress. It is impossible to read the evidence given both before the Royal Commission on Agriculture and before this Commission on Local Taxation, even if we could ignore our own observation and experience, without being satisfied that there is among the rural clergy of the Church of England at the present day an enormous amount of what I would describe, not only as deplorable, but scandalous poverty. It is a reproach to the Church of England. It is a serious prejudice, I will add, to the best moral and spiritual interests of the communities among which these clergy-

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men work. To men who ought to be, in view of the nature of their office and calling, not only men of education and refinement, but men set free from the sordid and distracting anxieties of making material provision for their families, it cannot but be prejudicial that the present state of things should so long continue to exist. But relief of rating will do little or nothing as a remedy. What are you going to do by this Bill? You are going to distribute £87,000 among 11,000 clergy—an average of something like £8 a head; and let me remark, in passing, that that average is extremely hypothetical, for who will get the bulk of the money? The clergy who pay the highest rates. In other words, the clergymen whose rent-charges stand at the highest figure. Therefore I do not hesitate to say that as regards the poor clergymen, whose distress and necessity for relief I admit, I do not think the net effect of this Bill will be to give them more than £3 or £4 or £5 apiece. Is it not idle, then, to talk of this as a substantial contribution to their relief? The explanation, of course, is very simple. The distress of the clergy, wide, deep, and deplorable as it is, is due not to excessive rating. It is due in the first place and mainly to the fall in value of agricultural produce. The clergy, as owners of the tithe rent-charge, did very well in the good times of agriculture; but now that agriculture has been unprosperous for some years they are doing badly. But what is the moral? To my mind the moral is that it is extremely undesirable that the income of the parish clergyman should depend upon such a speculative and fluctuating security. Although at the time the State and Church thought that they were making an excellent bargain—

VISCOUNT CRANBORNE (Rochester):
A secure bargain.

MR. ASQUITH: The noble Lord says, "a secure bargain." You could not in point of fact have a security less well adapted for the steady, annual, permanent remuneration of the rural clergyman than the fluctuating values of agricultural produce. But this Bill does not attempt to touch that difficulty. There is another cause for the existing condition of things which I freely admit, and that is, not the over-assessment of the tithe rent-charge, but the under-assessment of

other forms of agricultural property. As has been stated from the beginning, the parson is at a disadvantage in this way, for tithe rent-charge is a visible and tangible thing, whereas the annual value of a farm is a thing on which it is possible to have a hundred different opinions. The assessment committees, as a rule, have consisted of farmers, and while they have assessed the parson at the full visible value of his tithe rent-charge, they have under-assessed what we in Scotland should call the agricultural subjects of the parish. But this Bill provides no remedy for that. I should be entirely disposed to support a Bill, such as I hope will soon be introduced, to render our system of assessment throughout the country uniform, and to base it on fixed principles which will do complete justice to all the different forms of property. I need not say that every great authority on this subject, and Sir George Cornwall Lewis in particular, pointed to this as the only real and solid grievance of the clerical tithe-owners. These being the real facts of the case, let me discuss the remedy, or the suggested remedy, of this Bill. In the first place, as I have already said, among the recipients of this sum of £87,000 will be many persons who have no real claim to relief, and to many of those who have a claim the relief will not be in proportion to the necessity of the person to whom it is given. But there is a much more serious matter. Whence is to come this £87,000? The President of the Board of Agriculture, in introducing the Bill, said, and said truly, that it was a most interesting question; and the right hon. Gentleman's treatment of the subject was certainly not less interesting than the question itself. He told us that in 1896, when the Government brought in the Agricultural Rating Bill, they found themselves compelled to have recourse to the Imperial Exchequer. "But," says the right hon. Gentleman, "we are in a more fortunate position now. We need not go to the Exchequer at all. We have lying ready a sum of money unused—almost, as it were, inviting its own appropriation." Where is it? It is the balance, the surplus unforeseeable, or at least uncalculated, of the contribution from the Exchequer to the Local Taxation Account. When that contribution increases one year as compared with another there is a surplus, and, as the right hon. Gentleman almost

pathetically said, if we do not seize it and snatch it for ourselves it will go in improvident expenditure by the local authorities. So, the right hon. Gentleman says, we can kill two birds with one stone. On the one hand, we can protect the precarious virtue of the local authorities from the dangerous temptation to extravagance presented by the existence of this unexpected balance; and, on the other hand, we can relieve the poor clergy of half their rates without any expense to the Imperial Exchequer. I really do not know for what class of hearers or readers these ingenuous sophistries were intended. What is the Local Taxation Account? It is a device, a creation—some of us think an ill-starred creation—of the misplaced ingenuity of Conservative financiers. But there it is; and it may be fairly described as a sort of intercepting reservoir which collects and retains certain streams of taxation which otherwise would fall into the common basin of the general Exchequer. It is supplied from the same sources, it is contributed to by the same persons, as the Exchequer at large. Nothing gets into the Local Taxation Account by accident, and nothing remains there unappropriated or at large. It is the creature of statute, both as to the funds which get there and as to the manner of their application. The right hon. Gentleman speaks of this balance as if it were some happy-go-lucky godsend, which, by strange caprice of Providence, had fallen there for the first grabber to seize. The local authorities have a statutory title to every penny that comes into this account. It is a title given by Act of Parliament. They watch the growth of that part of the Revenue which is assigned to their purposes week by week and month by month with the same vigilance as the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself, and when they are framing their budgets and making their financial arrangements for the coming year, they appropriate—most legitimately as long as this vicious system of finance continues—the growing increment of one year as compared with the year before for their own local purposes, and estimate the rate to be struck in reference to the amount which they expect to receive from the Exchequer. What the right hon. Gentleman is really doing is to take away a vested and statutory interest which these local authorities have in

the Local Taxation Account and apply it for the benefit of the clergy. Every penny of this £87,000 is drawn from the pockets of the taxpayers; and every penny is withdrawn from a fund which would otherwise have gone in relief of local taxation. In other words, to put it shortly, the taxpayer pays the dole and the ratepayer loses it. I have little more to say. I think I have shown to the House—first, that the clergy have, from time immemorial, been subject to the burden of the local rates; next, that the present most deplorable condition of clerical distress can, in no real or effective sense, be really said to be due to excessive rating; and, thirdly, that the money proposed to be given is money which the taxpayer will pay and of which the ratepayer will be deprived. In fact, this Bill, stripped of its masks and disguises, is in reality a proposal to relieve the pockets of a section of the clergy of the National Church at the expense of the general body of the ratepaying and tax-paying community. It would be precisely the same thing in substance, and, in my opinion, much more logical and defensible in form, if, instead of calling this a contribution in aid of rates, it were called a contribution to make up for the falling-off in recent years of the annual value of the tithe rent-charge. There is no distinction in substance between the two things. It is therefore, in fact, as it was described by the Leader of the Opposition, a proposal *pro tanto* to re-endow the Church of England out of the taxpayers' pockets. Those who are concerned to defend the principle and policy of Establishment—and I am not one of them—may and should consider with themselves how far such a scheme, when its true meaning is grasped and realised by the nation at large, is likely to promote the cause which they have at heart. To all, whether believers in the principle of Establishment or not, who are interested in the fortunes of the Church of England, clerical poverty must appear to be one of the Church's most formidable hindrances as a spiritual organisation; and the removal and mitigation of that poverty must appear one of the most sacred and urgent of their own obligations. But the more deeply they ponder the matter, the more will they shrink from such expedients as are contained in this Bill. It is a Bill which seeks to remedy suffering at the

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cost of justice. It gives, at once inadequately and without discrimination, to one man more than he wants, to another man less than he needs. It provides relief for the suffering clergy of the richest communion in the civilised world—not at the expense of the members of that Church, not even at the expense of those who, whether members of the Church or not, have resources available to respond to the appeals of compassion and charity; it provides for it by a draft to be levied, without regard either to creed or to means, upon the whole body of the taxpayers of the nation. It is not by such means in the long run that either the clergy or the Church will benefit. It is as much in their interest, I fully believe, as it is in the name of justice and sound policy that I ask the House to reject this measure.

Amendment proposed—

“To leave out the word ‘now,’ and at the end of the Question to add the words ‘upon this day three months.’”—(*Mr. Asquith.*)

Question proposed, “That the word ‘now’ stand part of the Question.”

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (*Mr. WALTER LONG, Liverpool, West Derby*): On the occasion of the introduction of this Bill the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition regretted that the charge of the Bill had not fallen into the hands of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I cordially agree, and I desire to express how strongly I feel that the cause on whose behalf this Bill is produced suffers still more on this occasion when it becomes my lot to follow one of the most brilliant debaters this House contains. The personal disabilities under which I suffer would be overwhelming if it were not that I can with confidence rely upon the absolute excellence of my case. I have listened to the right hon. Gentleman's speech with disappointment. I thought that, as the opposition to this question was to be dealt with by the House of Commons upon the initiative of the right hon. Gentleman, we should, at all events, have had some comparatively new examination of this subject, and some new presentment of the opposition to the case we have put before the House. But we have only had reproduced arguments which we have

heard for a very long time, in regard to the existence and the application of tithe. Putting aside the question of the position of the tithe-owner as a ratepayer now and his position when the Act of 1836 was passed, the speech of the right hon. Gentleman would have been equally applicable to a motion for the application of tithes for some other purpose than that to which they have now for many years been devoted. It is true the right hon. Gentleman reminded us that this Bill had never been mentioned in the Queen's Speech, but that is no reason why we should not legislate. Hon. Gentlemen opposite have also, I believe, brought in measures to which they attached importance without their having been mentioned in the Queen's Speech. We are also told that it was not included in the Agricultural Rates Act. But the procedure adopted in that case was not one that could be applied to tithe. In dealing with the agricultural rates we separated buildings from land, and anybody who knows anything of the history of the tithe rent-charge knows it would have been practically impossible to have applied precisely the same procedure to the tithe rent-charge rates. A serious attack was then made upon the Commission and its interim Report. That Commission, which it is not my business to defend, contains amongst its members many gentlemen of great distinction, and one of those who signed the Report was a late colleague of the right hon. Gentleman himself. I am confident that Sir John Hibbert would not have put his name to the Report unless he agreed in full with its contents, and believed the recommendations were just and wise, and such as ought to have been made. A further objection was taken that tithes have always been rated, and therefore should not be relieved. I am always rather puzzled when I hear this “hereditary burden” argument. It seems to come to this: “These tithes are like agricultural land—they have always been rated, they have always been liable to this particular burden, and you have no right to relieve them.” If we are satisfied—and this Commission was satisfied—that the present incidence of rates upon tithe rent-charge is unjust, and that therefore some steps should be taken to relieve the owners from this burden, is it an answer to our contention to say that because they have been rated from time immemorial we have no right whatever to relieve them now,

even though we believe the present incidence to be unjust? Is it not possible that the incidence may have altered in a way which would justify a different treatment now from that which was accorded in past years? The right hon. Gentleman threw great ridicule upon the historical portion of the Report; but if Members will look at the language of the Acts of Elizabeth in regard to rates and follow it up, they will see that the clerical tithe-owners have a great deal of justification for their contention that they are unfairly treated when they, as incumbents, are rated as residents and also rated as owners of tithe rent-charge. If the cases which are quoted in the Report are taken it will be found that subsequently relief was sought for these clergy, which relief has been from time to time swept away. While I admit that it is idle to contend now that they are entitled to complete relief, or to contend that originally their property was not intended to be rated and therefore they ought to be relieved, on the other hand, it seems to me that they are entitled to put their case before us, and we are bound to admit that there is a great deal to be said for their contention that if the spirit of the original Act had been adhered to the clerical owner of tithe rent-charge would have escaped this particular burden. The right hon. Gentleman has dealt with the case of the imposition of an additional sum for rates, but he did not fall into the error which many people outside have fallen into with regard to this particular question. It has been alleged that when the composition of 1836 was arrived at sums representing rates were added to the tithe; that consequently the clerical owner of tithe rent-charge was given a sum to represent the rates, and that now to relieve him of a portion of the rates is to give him money twice over. That argument has been adopted by many people, and I shall be only doing my duty if I point out that it is a complete fallacy for which there is not the slightest foundation. Hon. Members of this House have asked me where that allegation can be maintained. It will be clear to anybody who will examine the Act of 1836 that in respect of rates no addition whatever was made for tithe as tithe, but only to the balance of the tithe. If evidence as to the fallacy of that statement were needed, it is to be found in the simplest form in one of the appendices handed into the

Local Taxation Commissioners. There are two cases given there which I will quote. The first is the parish of Hedon in the East Riding of Yorkshire, where the tithe composition is £45 16s. 8d.; rates on two-thirds of same, paid by occupiers, £6; land tax, 16s.; add one-fifth, £10 7s. 4d.; making a total of £63. The next case is that of the parish of Newchurch, Radnor, where the tithe composition is £138 7s. It expressly states that the rates and taxes had been paid by the occupiers for the first six years and by the rector for the seventh year, the average amount being admitted to be £12; six-sevenths of £12 equals £10 5s. 8d., total £148 12s. 8d.—showing clearly that in the case where the rates had been paid for six years by the occupier and one year only by the rector, six-sevenths only are allowed to count, the seventh year being excluded because of their having been paid by the tithe-owner himself. I hope that removes the misapprehension which appears to exist upon that point, and I apologise to the House for having taken up so much time in dealing with it, but I have done so because that view has found general acceptance outside the House of Commons, and it is contrary to the facts of the case. The right hon. Gentleman dealt with some considerable force with the question of charitable relief, which he says this Bill professes to give. Now this Bill professes to give no charitable relief whatever, and it is not submitted to the consideration of this House upon those grounds. The right hon. Gentleman who has just addressed the House identified himself with the language used by the Leader of the Opposition when he addressed the House upon the subject of this Bill. [Opposition cheers.] Hon. Gentlemen opposite cheer that remark, but I confess that I could not help hoping that when the Leader of the Opposition—whose reputation for fairness and consideration is known to all men—came to reflect upon what he had said upon that occasion he would feel that he had gone further than he ought to have done, and further certainly than the facts justified him in going. The suggestion is thrown at the head of the Church of England that she is coming for relief to the State, and that she ought to help her poor clergy out of the pockets of the rich members of her own faith, as the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the

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Opposition said they did in Scotland. I am inclined to think that the Church of England is trying to do it, and we are trying to do for her what Parliament has done for the Church of Scotland. The right hon. Gentleman says we ought to put our hands into our own pockets and find the money for the requirements of our own Church, but do the members of the Church of England not do that? I have before me the amounts of voluntary contributions (inclusive of the voluntary sums paid through the Ecclesiastical Commissioners) for the fourteen years between 1884 and 1897, and I find that during that period the total in endowments was £2,007,292, and in parsonage houses £1,337,523. This is the amount of money which has passed through the hands of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and is quite independent of private contributions from other sources through other channels. This is evidence of what private members of the Church of England do for their Church; but when we come to propose to relieve the ministers' stipends of rates we are told to follow the example of Scotland. Now what is the example of Scotland? I am informed that ministers' stipends were made liable in 1845 for the poor rate for the first time. I am rather chary in describing how ministers' salaries arose in Scotland, but I think I am right in saying that the teinds are held by the landowner with the obligation of providing a stipend for the clergy, and in the case of the clergy no rates are paid upon the stipends which arise out of the tiends. In 1845 they were expressly made liable in those cases where poor rate was levied according to means and substance. Generally speaking, that is an accurate statement. In 1861 means and substance rating was abolished by Act of Parliament, and consequently stipends are not now liable for poor rate. Mr. Baxter carried that Bill through, I believe, with the approval of the Liberal Government. Therefore, this relief of ministers' stipends from their liability from rating was secured for Scotch ministers in the same way as we are now securing it by coming to Parliament for legislation. Well, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman dealt with another argument. He took the present position of the tithe-owner in regard to the rates, and his position at the time of the passing of the Act of 1836, and he told the House perfectly truly that there had been in that

time a fall in the rates, and he stated the fall as accurately as it could be stated. But his statement was very different from statements which have been made outside the House. We are told that in 1836 the rates were 10s. in the pound.

MR. ASQUITH: In some parishes they were.

MR. LONG: It is argued that as the rates have now fallen to 2s. 6d. the tithe-owner's position is very much improved. No doubt in some parishes the rates are 10s. in the pound, but in very few. At that time the cost of maintaining the poor was a parish charge and the clerical tithe-owner only got the same advantage from the decrease of the rates that every other ratepayer in the country got. To argue that the decrease in these rates, notwithstanding the fact that fresh rates have been created since, is a reason why we should not give rate relief to these clerical tithe-owners, is to beg the question altogether. It is not a question of whether the rates have risen or fallen; it is a question of whether the clerical tithe-owner, as the occupier of a rateable hereditament, pays a fair proportion of local taxation or whether he does not. If he pays a fair proportion as compared with other ratepayers, then there is no case for this Bill, but if the owner of clerical tithe rent-charge—paying as he does one-twentieth of his net income in rates and taxes—pays in a degree altogether out of proportion to his means and ability, and out of proportion to the burden imposed on other ratepayers, then the fact that the rates have fallen is no reason why we should not legislate in order to effect in a reasonable manner this suggested reform. We are told that if it is necessary to give relief to these greatly oppressed clergy, why do it in this way? The right hon. Gentleman was extremely eloquent over our iniquities in taking this money out of the Local Taxation Fund; but this is not the first time that Parliament has made a demand upon that fund in order to meet certain local requirements, and I am sure there is nothing in this case which makes it a high crime and misdemeanour when we make a similar demand for other purposes. I understand that it is the argument of the right hon. Gentleman that we ought not to take it out of the Local Taxation Fund; but by relieving the clergy of one part of the rates and distribut-

ing that burden through the means of the Local Taxation Fund you so break up that burden that the weight of it becomes scarcely appreciable. I am quite aware that if it is an unjust burden it ought not to be imposed, even though it amounted to no more than sixpence or ninepence a year; but it does not rest with you to throw it in our teeth that we have taken this out of the Local Taxation Fund. What did you do years ago? In 1893 the Government took over the administration of the Cattle Diseases Act, and Parliament was not only asked to take over the administration of the Act, but also the cost of it, and in a manner almost contemptuous you threw the balance of the cost on the Local Taxation Account.

MR. ASQUITH: But it was done for the benefit of the whole community.

MR. WALTER LONG: If that was the case, then it should have been paid out of the Imperial taxes. Why did you not make the whole community pay if the community gets the advantage, and is there any other way of doing that besides paying it out of the Imperial Exchequer? But whether you were right or wrong in 1893, I submit that you cannot charge us now with being guilty of a high crime, because in order to meet this deficiency we propose to cast this burden upon the Local Taxation Account, when you yourselves did the same thing in 1893 when you required money for a similar purpose. But it must be remembered that this relief of the rates upon the property of the tithe-owner applies only to England. It does not exist in Scotland or Ireland. If we had taken the money from any other source we would have been making Scotland and Ireland pay in respect to a grievance which applies to England only. In this case, in falling back on the Local Taxation Account, which is allocated to England alone, we were, I submit, doing that which provided the simplest method and the one most likely to give the least trouble to those concerned. I am not aware that there has been any other opposition offered to our proposal. I understand that the view of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite is that there is not any case for reform. They argue, in the first place, that the clergy are not entitled to relief from the payment of rates, and

if so, that that ought to be done in some other way. They say that the position of the clergy is better than it was in 1836, and that they enjoy many advantages; but no attempt has been made to produce a case of a person rated at the present time, whose burden can be compared with that of the tithe-owners. Now, I made a quotation the other day from a speech made by Mr. Gladstone in 1852. May I make one further quotation from Mr. Gladstone? He was speaking upon the Commutation Rent-charge Bill, in 1856, and he said:

"He would respectfully press upon the House that, after the universal admission which had been made as to the existence of the grievance which was the subject of the Bill under consideration, it would not be altogether creditable to allow small difficulties of detail and small differences of opinion to prevent the application of a remedy to that grievance. They ought not to fold their arms and say, 'Although the grievance is plain, palpable, and even scandalous, we cannot, on account of difficulties of detail, attempt to provide a remedy.' It would be far better to apply a remedy which was open to some abstract objections than any longer to neglect the subject."

I ask the House to bear in mind these words of Mr. Gladstone. No attempt has been made to deny the existence of this injustice; no attempt has been made to show that the clerical tithe-owner is not unfairly rated, and that the incidence of the rates is not one that constitutes a great injustice. In the absence of any evidence of that kind, I ask the House whether we ought to refuse to remove this grievance. We do not put this Bill before the House as an act of charity; we do not ask you to give charitable relief to men who are trying to discharge in an efficient way the duties of their difficult position, though undoubtedly they are in too many cases very poor men. We ask it as a measure of common and too long delayed justice, because we believe that the clerical tithe-owner is rated in a manner which imposes on him a great injustice, and because we believe that you can give him relief by a method which is fair and reasonable, and which will give the greatest relief in the most direct manner, while casting the burden of filling up the vacuum over the widest possible area. The right hon. Gentleman made much of the argument that we do not propose to give relief to the most necessitous of the clergy, but to rich and poor alike. I accept his description. We

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do not pretend to relieve the clergy according to their sufferings or their poverty, and I hope that we have heard the last of the charitable dole argument. What we are doing is to relieve a burden which we consider to be unjust, and it is because we propose to relieve an injustice by a fair and reasonable method that I ask the House to pass the Second Reading of this Bill.

MR. BIRRELL (Fife, W.): The right hon. Gentleman has apologised for the disadvantage in which he was placed in having to follow the most brilliant debater in the House; but I am quite sure that he is perfectly competent to deal with any question which belongs to his Department, and he has made—I will not say a strong defence, but the best possible defence that he could have made of the measure, the Second Reading of which he asked the House to grant. The right hon. Gentleman has found some subtle connection between clerical poverty and the cattle disease, and perhaps that was rather appropriate, coming from the President of the Board of Agriculture. The great point made by the right hon. Gentleman was to disabuse the public mind of the notion that in the commutation of tithe in 1836 a sum was added in respect of rates. Now, as the late Home Secretary pointed out, before the Tithe Commutation Act of 1836 was passed, over the greater part of the parishes of the country—some say in two-thirds, but certainly in more than a half of them—an arrangement of a peculiar character was come to as to the payment of tithes; and in respect of all these parishes where the parson had his *modus* this allotment in respect of rates was made. Consequently, if the fact is true, not for all the country, but at all events for two-thirds of it, if you make an argument which is two-thirds true, there is not much chance of anybody ceasing to repeat it. The right hon. Gentleman repudiated with some warmth—and I do not wonder at it—the notion that he was here charitably pleading the case of the poor clergy, and he said we must hear no more of that. I am afraid he will. I confess, so far as I am concerned, that the natural pleasure which I would otherwise have in opposing a Bill like this, inopportune in the hour of its birth, most unconstitutional in its mode of delivery, and most un-

fair and partial in the scope of its operation, is almost destroyed by the knowledge I have that a very considerable number—how many it is difficult to state—of the class for whose exclusive benefit the Bill, as I understand, is intended, are at the present moment in circumstances of great straits and necessities. The distressing poverty—one might say the abject poverty—of a considerable number of the beneficed clergy of the Church of England is indisputable. Societies, charitable societies, already exist and have been called into existence to supply them with money and with clothing for their families and those dependent upon them. The whirligig of time brings about its strange revenges. It is no longer the poor Dissenting ministers—long the derision and the scorn of their tithe-paid contemporaries—who are the object of men's compassion and the recipient of their charity. The poor Dissenting minister, to whatever denomination he belongs, has his augmentation fund to fall back upon, and our compassion is excited to-day by the circumstances of the priests who serve the altars of the Church which is not only the richest Church in Christendom, but the Church which still contains on its roll-call of members the great noblemen and the rich landlords who are still in possession of what was once, at any rate, the Church's property, whose annual revenues are swollen as lay impropiators by the large tithe which surely, no less than the small tithe, was at one time devoted to the twofold purpose of the worship of God and the maintenance of the poor. We are hardly likely, that being so, to overlook that fact, and should we regard this House as a branch committee of the Charity Organisation Society? I cannot imagine anyone could be stony-hearted enough to refuse grants out of the funds contributed by the faithful to the relief, on account of their poverty, of the priests of the Church which enjoys the unique distinction of having been despoiled by her own children. Well, we know well enough that is not the way in which the case is presented to the House by the supporters of the Bill. They say the poverty of the clergy is much to be regretted, and that they are doing something to relieve it. I am glad to hear it, and have no doubt that it is so. But they say that their case is based upon justice. Quite so. And they say

that if the poverty-stricken beneficed clergy were as rich as South African millionaires the case would still be one of justice which this House ought, at once, to proceed to relieve. You cannot have it both ways. You surely are not going to tell us on this side of the House that rich men are not entitled to justice irrespective of their pecuniary means. Consequently it is said that as this Bill is based on the fact that the tithe rent-charge is unjustly rated, that only proves, what is so often said in the House, that justice in this country is a very slow-footed animal, and that it has taken a long time to develop the opinion that this injustice should be relieved. You seem to say that for all those years the tithe rent-charge has been unjustly rated, and if it is asked why, the only reason that I have ever heard assigned is that the clergyman is the only professional man rated in respect of his income. The right hon. Gentleman referred to the Scotch case, and spoke of the stipend which the clergy of the Church of Scotland received from the heritors. Well, the question is, Is it true now to say that a beneficed clergyman of the Church of England is, in respect to the tithe rent charge, in the position of a professional man in receipt of a professional income, paid for professional services, like a country doctor or country lawyer is paid, and for which he is rated. That is the point. In fact, the whole point of this case seems to rest on the principle that no man ought to be rated in respect of his professional income. I must own that it is just a little irritating to anybody who has any acquaintance with the history of the Church of England, particularly in relation to Nonconformity, to notice how the supporters and adherents of the Church, like the chameleon, change their colour just to suit the surrounding circumstances. I should like to know what would have happened fifty or sixty or seventy years ago, when the tithe rent-charge stood at 120, or before the Tithe Commutation Act of 1836, if some Baptist blacksmith, speaking on the village green, told his rustic audience that the rector of the parish was in receipt of a professional income, just like the doctor of the locality, or the village attorney, or the village apothecary, and that he received from the parishioners money in respect of the work he did. He would have stood a very good

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chance—that village blacksmith—of finding himself in the stocks. And yet we hear this language now from the front bench, and we hear from the advocates of the Church that the clergy are professional men in receipt of a professional income, and that they ought to be exempted from the rates because they are so. Well now, consider that only for a single moment. The Nonconformists used to be told, until we were sick of hearing it, that the great advantage and the great merit of the parochial system, as opposed to the system of the Free Church, was that it sent a gentleman into every parish. It is not always a gentleman, having regard to some of the statements made by the Rector of Flint. But at all events there was force in the argument that you sent a gentleman into every parish who was not a dependent, and who did not receive his professional income as did his poor miserable Nonconformist brother—if, indeed, I may even call him a “brother” at all—from the support of shopkeepers and of farmers. No; he was there as a gentleman and as a landowner; he was there holding a benefice as a freehold office; he was in possession of his glebe, and he was there receiving his revenues from the tithe rent-charge, which is the first charge upon every rood of land in his parish, and which is wholly independent of all the expenses of maintaining the estate and of repairs. We could not hear enough of the great merits which belong to this method of payment. It is a payment wholly irrespective of work done. It does not depend upon the extent or size of the parish; it does not depend upon the labours which the parson has to perform. And so there he was. His parishioners did not choose him, his parishioners cannot dismiss him. They take him, like the weather, as a great and mysterious force. If he is dull and dreary he must be put up with. How, therefore, can you possibly compare in any single way whatever a clergyman's position with that of a struggling professional man who is open to competition? A parson is not open to any competition whatever. Possibly a Nonconformist may steal his congregation, but he cannot touch his tithe. There he is in possession. I am not going to deny that it is a position which has its advantages. But you cannot approbate and reprobate, you cannot blow hot and blow cold, you cannot

enjoy the position which you do enjoy, and have enjoyed for many years past, as holding a beneficed freehold, deriving an income from the land, and yet be as if you were holding a professional occupation in open competition with your fellow-men. I therefore cannot understand how this argument that you must not be rated on your professional income can possibly be applied to the beneficed clergy of the Church of England. I should like hon. Members who have used that argument again and again to say what they mean when they assert that a beneficed clergyman of the Church of England is in possession of a professional income. Take the case of the Church of Scotland. There a clergyman has his stipend, which is paid him by the heritors, and he takes all the tithes. Very well; he may get that stipend increased if his parish increases, if his work increases, if his duties increase. He gets not only his stipend, but he is paid for value received and work done; and therefore, to some extent, he, at all events, may be said to be a professional man in receipt of a professional income. But that cannot, in my judgment, be said of a clergyman of the Church of England. The English clergy have had the advantage of the tithe in times when the land, in matters of taxation, enjoyed great privileges, and, notwithstanding the Finance Act of my right hon. friend, it still enjoys very considerable advantages. At all events, the land of the Church of England—or, rather, of the innumerable corporations which go to make up what we conventionally call the Church of England—is still the property of large owners, and I believe I am right in saying that this land was free from succession duty until Mr. Gladstone's legislation in 1883; even at the present time the land of the Church of England goes from generation to generation without paying anything to the State in the nature of succession duty. It is too late for the clergy, simply because of the pressure of agricultural prices at the present moment, to come and say, "We want the whole thing changed; we want half of our rates paid because these ancestral duties, although not so heavy now as they were, are heavier than they ought to be." I maintain that the arguments in favour of this Bill can only be supported—if they can be supported at all—on account of the poverty of some of the clergy. It is too late to come and ask

for any readjustment of the rates upon land which has borne that burden from time immemorial, and should continue to bear it until the whole question can be treated in one broad and statesmanlike measure. There is one argument which has not been used to-day, but which may be used in the course of the Debate, from which I should like to dissociate myself, and that is the Protestant argument. I do not think you should refuse justice to the clergy because you think they may entertain opinions which you do not share yourselves. Nobody is more fully alive than I am to the dangerous consequences that must ultimately flow, in my opinion, from the ever-widening gulf of opinion between the clergy of the Anglican Church and the great body of laity, but I do not think the poverty of the clergy in any way interferes with their Protestantism. In fact, if I may venture so to say, I think the better half of the clergy are not likely to indulge in those opinions which excite disagreement in some quarters of the House. We all know that the great bulwark against the spread of Romanism amongst the ranks of the clergy is the freedom which they at present enjoy to get married, and that freedom, I am sorry to say, in many instances, they cannot avail themselves of owing to the extreme poverty of their livings. Therefore, anything which goes to make the clergy better off is, in my judgment, rather likely to create a sound Protestant conviction. I merely make that remark for the purpose of showing that I am not, in opposing this Bill, animated by any hostility to the religious convictions of any body of the clergy. I can only express my absolute amazement, as one who has been, for some time at all events, connected with what is called the Disestablishment movement, at the folly of Her Majesty's Ministers in introducing this Bill at the present time. It is just like a handful of silver scattered at random amongst the 10,000 or 12,000 or 13,000 beneficed clergy. Up to the present time the Church of England, in my judgment—I know some of my friends will disagree with me upon this point—has always occupied the position of being able to say to all its opponents, "At all events we cost you nothing; not a farthing of your money comes into our pockets; you may dispute our authority if you like; you may question the truth of our creed if you feel compelled so to

do; you may question the utility of our work amongst the poor if you are sufficiently ill-advised — these things are matters of controversy. But it is not a matter of controversy that our property is our own, subject, of course, like all other property, to the law of the land." But now there is not a district in the country that will not be able to say in pounds shillings and pence how much money would have come to them, to be devoted either to the reduction of their rates or to swell their county council balances, but for this Bill; and they will be able to point to the parson and say, "And yours is the pocket into which it has gone!" And just for this beggarly dole of £87,000 you are departing from a position which, I believe, you will be very anxious—if you can—to replace yourselves back into. For my part I am bound to say that the right hon. Gentleman, by repudiating altogether, as I suppose he was bound to do, the case of charity and of compassion, and putting his case for this Bill upon the ground of absolute justice, has entirely failed to produce a single argument in support of his proposition that the old and time-honoured method of rating the land should be put by itself, and not as part of a statesman like scheme dealing with the whole situation.

*MR. CRIPPS (Gloucester, Stroud): I am bound to confess that, so far as I can see, a great portion of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down was irrelevant to the matter before the House. The matter before the House is whether at the present time, under the present condition of the law, the rate on the tithe rent-charge is just or whether it is unjust, and before I go into the argument of the right hon. Gentleman who moved the rejection of this Bill let me state the argument in favour of this Bill. It has been pointed out that in this country rates are never made on gross revenue except in the case of the tithe rent-charge. That cannot be gainsaid, and I put my case upon this simple ground that you find in the case of the clergy that gross revenue is rated, and that there is no other property of any sort or kind in this country that is rated in the same way or suffers under the same burden. Now, may I on this point draw the attention of the House to an adden-

dum to the Report of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation, which was signed by Sir John Hibberd, Sir George Murray, and myself. We were all agreed upon this point, and I do not think that it can be controverted by anybody who looks into the case. What do we say? We say:

"We desire to add that, in our opinion, the inequality which exists to the detriment of the owners of tithe rent-charge not severed from the benefice is due to the fact that, in ascertaining the rateable value of such tithe rent-charge, sufficient deductions from the gross value have not been allowed; and that it is necessary, in order to place the owners of such tithe rent-charge on a footing of equality with the owners or occupiers of other rateable property, to provide by legislation for the allowance of further deductions from the gross value, and in such deductions to recognise the liability which is imposed on the owners of such tithe rent-charge to render certain services as a condition of enjoying their emoluments."

But the right hon. Gentleman opposite, when he moved the rejection of the Bill, never dealt with this argument at all.

MR. ASQUITH: That is not the proposal.

*MR. CRIPPS: The right hon. Gentleman says that that is not the proposal. The proposal is this, that whereas you do not put into operation what we suggest in our addendum you do the same thing in another way when you say that the tithe rent-charge is only to be rated at half its present value. Now I challenge the right hon. Gentleman on this point, and I undertake to show, before I sit down, that, so far as money and results are concerned, this Bill attains substantially the same result that we point to in our addendum. Now I want to challenge the hon. Member opposite, when he speaks again, to deal with this question. Can anybody say that the rates on tithe rent-charges are not charged on gross revenue? Can anybody say they are charged on net annual value? The tithe rent-charge is the commutation of the old tithes and is not a portion of rent at all. The clergy never had one-tenth of the rents of this country, they had one-tenth of the produce; and so far as the produce was concerned it did not become tithe until it had been separated. That is a distinct point. Now, is there any other property or produce which is rated on the same principle as tithe rent-charges at the present moment?

Mr. Burrell.

An hon. Member nods his head. I challenge him to show me one case where any property is rated on the same basis as this. This is the very essence of injustice, which is pointed out in a large number of cases. If it were not a case of injustice no such Bill as this ought to be proposed at all. I do not believe in the charitable argument; and as regards the doles argument, nothing has or could be more wholly repudiated than that has been by all the true friends of the Church. What is it that is asked? If a man is unjustly treated, he is entitled to have that injustice put right. This is not asking for an endowment or a dole, but for simple justice and nothing more. Let me deal for a moment with what the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition said the other day. He told hon. Gentlemen in this House the other day that the laity of the Church of England were not sufficiently generous in providing funds. The answer is that they last year provided £7,500,000 for Church purposes. Are we to be taunted that we did not contribute fairly? But let me go beyond that. What are contributions of this kind to do with it when it is a case of legal justice? I may give a man thousands of pounds, but that is no remedy if he is suffering under legal injustice which ought to be remedied. I trust this injustice will be remedied by the present Bill. Having stated as near as I can what I may call the main position which has been taken up by all members of the Royal Commission, let me just say a word or two with regard to the arguments of the right hon. Member for East Fife. I was fairly startled at his speech, both by the attacks which he made on the Royal Commission and by his own inaccuracies. I have never heard less careful statements, having regard to the subject matter, and to what he said as regards the Report of the Royal Commission. The right hon. Member said the Report was superficial and misleading. He said it was full of historic fallacies. I listened to his speech with great anxiety and interest; and having listened to him, I say that he made a statement of that kind without supporting it by a single detail in any part of his speech. There is no more crucial point on this question than what took place in 1836. What did the right hon. Gentleman say as regards Section 69 of the Act of 1836? I noted it. He

says that Section 69 of the Act of 1836 placed all rates in the tithe rent-charge. It did nothing of the sort. What it did do was to make the tithe rent-charge liable in the same manner as the commuted tithes. The point that has always been discussed is what were the rates on the commuted tithe, and whether the method of assessment since the Act of 1836 has not been unfairly made. That is the whole issue, and yet the right hon. Gentleman, who accuses the Report of the Royal Commission of being superficial and misleading, when he comes to the facts themselves, makes the very statement that shows a very superficial knowledge of this great subject. The question is, whether the rates on this tithe rent-charge are fairly adjusted or not. In 1836 they were only to be the same as on the commuted tithe charge, and the issue between those who support this Bill and those on the other side of the House must to a great extent, so far as the historical retrospect is concerned, depend upon that point, because if this Bill is passed the rates on the tithe rent-charge will conform to the rates on the commuted tithe in 1836. The question is not whether this is a rateable property or not, but rather how it should be rated; and when you come to that point, the so-called additions have nothing to do with the matter. It has been suggested that this is a very crucial point in this discussion, and that because certain changes and additions have been made in order to turn the tithe rent-charge into a rateable property it is unfair to make the proposed alteration. But the answer to that is that these additions were only made in order that all rates should be paid on the same basis. Where rates had not been paid by the tithe-owner it was necessary to make the addition in order to make the matter fair all around, and that is not the question here. It is not a question whether the rates are to be paid or not. The question is whether the assessment of those rates is right; and in order to show that it is right hon. Members opposite say that there are other cases where grievances exist as well as this one. So far as the judgment of the right hon. Gentleman opposite is concerned, it is a question merely of doles and endowments. I do not agree with that. The right hon. Gentleman did not grapple with the original premisses, he did not give one

word of argument to show that the rate on tithes was properly and fairly assessed. If he believed the present method of rating tithes was just and fair, why did he not deduce some argument in support of it? It is all very well to talk about the Non-conformists and prejudice, and say that it is not right to remedy injustice because the class that suffers is small. But that is the question that you must decide, that is the true problem which the country will decide. Are you not more likely in the long run to get your assessments fair by remedying the injustices as they are brought to your knowledge than by leaving them alone? With regard to the history of the matter which has been said to be so misleading—the first statute that we had was one of the year 1601, but except for the purposes of historical research it is not necessary to go back to that date. If you go back to that statute you will find that a person is to be rated either as an occupier or upon his ability. If you rated everybody upon that principle nothing could be fairer, but that is impossible. It has been tried from time to time, and was finally abolished in 1840. From 1840, and for many years previous to that, there has been this continuing injustice. The political cry has always been, “Let us put it off to a more convenient season, and not face the possible odium from the cry that it is giving charitable doles.” If anybody who thinks that this is an injustice is led away by an argument of that kind I hope he does not sit on this side of the House. It ought to be pointed out that in 1836, when the Act was passed fixing the liability of the tithe rent-charge, there was in existence a decision in a court of law which did in effect what we want to do by this Bill. That is the reason for the introduction of those words that the tithe rent charge shall be subject to rates in the same manner as the commuted tithes. In order that the point may be appreciated, I may state that in the same year there was also passed a Parochial Assessments Act, and in that Act words preserving the relative liability of different kinds of property were introduced. They were introduced in order to preserve to the clergy the benefit they had got under the decision of the Court of Queen’s Bench. Since then this decision has been reversed, and in subsequent cases the Judges have always conceived that they were bound by the later decision,

Mr. Cripps.

whatever their own views might be. The point I make is that we have now arrived at a time when to do justice in this matter we must have legislation, and in that legislation there must be one great principle which we must all bear in mind. It is that you must have equality of burden, and that without it there must be an unjust incidence of taxation. The view of the Royal Commission upon this matter is that there is no equality of taxation, and that the clergy are bearing more than their share at this moment. If hon. Gentlemen opposite assent that you must have equality of burden, let them show that such equality exists if they can; but if they cannot do that, let them admit that our argument is sound.

*MR. SAMUEL EVANS (Glamorgan, Mid.): The hon. and learned Gentleman who has just sat down started on premisses which we do not admit. If his argument is sound at all, it is not only sound with regard to those tithes which are still attached to the benefices, but is also sound as regards those which have been severed from the benefices. If this is not a question of dole, why do you not deal with the whole of the tithes? Why limit it to those which are still attached to the benefices? The only thing that can be drawn from the learned Gentleman’s argument is that you ought to deal differentially with the clergy. Since the year 1836 the clergy of this country have had no right to complain at all because they think they have made a bad bargain. I am willing to assume, although I have not seen much of it myself, that the clergy suffer from a degree of poverty in these days. But I will venture to put the disgrace of that poverty on the shoulders that ought to bear it—on the adherents of the Church of England whose ministers these people are. In 1836 the clergy desired to convert a property which was very difficult of realisation into a first charge on the land. This was done by agreements for the most part, and when those agreements were not come to it was done by awards of Commissioners, and as much as two millions of the tithes of the country was dealt with by agreement. Let us see whether the bargain which was made in 1836 was not an exceedingly favourable one at that time. By agreements alone the tithe rent-charges were fixed at £2,482,570 7s. 9d. The remaining £1,525,000 were fixed by com-

pulsory awards. In some cases the rates were paid by the tithe-owners. Where this was the case the rates were added to the tithe rent-charge, but in addition to this there was an increase in the tithe rent-charge, fixed by agreements alone, of £58,000 upon the £2,482,000, that is to say that, whereas such tithes up to that time were only calculated at £2,424,000, the tithe rent-charge given to the clergy in respect to those tithes was in excess of that by some £58,000, and in many cases the amounts paid to the clergymen were much higher than before. There is one case in Hertfordshire where the tithes were valued at £300. In that case the rates were paid by the landowner, and they amounted to £108, and when they were commuted for tithe rent-charge that amount came out at £408, but the tithe rent-charge itself was allowed at £520, which is an increase of £110. That is a typical instance of what occurred (and one is sufficient) in entering into the bargain of 1836. The clergy were told that, being made a first charge on the land, the tithe rent-charge would be subject to the rate which tithes had paid before. It was perfectly clear that in 1836 all rates were to be put on the tithe rent-charge, and the hon. and learned Gentleman suggests now that it ought to be exempted to the extent of half the rates. Since 1836 the tithe rent-charge has been treated in a very favourable way to the owners of the tithe rent-charge. Most of the impositions that have been placed upon the Rate Book since 1836 have been placed upon it by the Public Health Act of 1875. And in that Act the tithes were to be assessed on a quarter their value. And because they were treated too favourably in 1875 we now have a further complaint, and hon. Gentlemen opposite desire to see all the rates diminished by one-half in favour of the tithe-owners. We, on this side of the House, hold that the clergy have not made any case out for relief from public funds. It may be that they are suffering severely from the failure of agricultural prices, but have you a right on that account to help them out of the public funds?—[Cry of "No, no."]—The hon. Member says "No," but that is what you are doing in this case; this £87,000 is to come from the Probate Duty. It first of all comes into the Exchequer, and then it would come into the Local Taxation Account. The illustrations which the right

hon. Gentleman gave to enforce his argument were most extraordinary; he referred to the Cattle Diseases Act, a public Act of Parliament administered in various counties. The expenses of that Act rightly come out of the public fund. But it is quite a different thing to say you can relieve a class who have made out no claim to be relieved out of the public fund. Then, again, with regard to the equalisation of burden, that is a most extraordinary argument, because you now seek to put an additional burden on everybody else in order to relieve these clergy. There is not a cottage that will not have to pay an additional burden, and we object on the ground of that very principle of equality to workmen's cottages being rated more highly than they are at present, in order to increase the comforts or amenities of the parsonage or the rectory. Assuming there is a degree of clerical poverty owing to the decline in agricultural prices, in what way does the Government propose to deal with it. They make no distinction between poverty and wealth, but give back half the tithes to the clerical tithe-owners, whatever may be the value of their livings. They are adopting the principle of "To them who have much, much shall be given; to them that have little, even that little shall be taken away." What are you doing for the poor curate?

AN HON. MEMBER: He does not pay rates.

*MR. SAMUEL EVANS: But he suffers in poverty. The reason you want to relieve the owner of the benefice is because he suffers from poverty.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: No, no!

*MR. SAMUEL EVANS: Hon. Members who say that is not the reason will not persuade the House or the country of that fact. We have heard the wailing year after year, and it is solely on the ground that these poor clergy are said not to have reasonable and sufficient means of subsistence. When hon. Members go to meetings in the country they do not argue that the man who gets a thousand a year for doing no work at all in his parish is entitled to have his rates given back to him, but they refer to the man with a small living and a large family and great responsibilities, and they say, "Is it not

fair that this man, who has perhaps only £120 a year to live upon, should be relieved to some extent of the rates which he is paying?" I say the curates who work in the slums ought to be assisted, if anybody. But these curates love their work, and it is not from them you hear complaints. It is because of the complaints of the holders of benefices, who have organisations which spread literature broadcast throughout the country, that this Bill has been introduced. By no kind of argument can the recent statement of the Leader of the Opposition be disproved—that this is an additional endowment of the Church of England. It is said that it is only £87,000 per annum. But this sum, which is to be given to the incumbents of the Church, because the Church people themselves will not contribute to their support, is very nearly equal to the income of the 22 ordinary bishoprics in the province of Canterbury, and is three times as much as the income of the eight ordinary bishoprics in the province of York. If you were to try to establish and endow anew those 30 bishoprics, could anybody say that it was not an additional endowment of the Church of England? There is no difference in principle at all. You are going to the public funds to relieve these clergy who are ministering to the religion of the Church of England. In this matter the adherents of this wealthy Church might well take their example from what is done by the Nonconformists of this country. Nonconformist ministers are often not paid as much as they ought to be, and as we should like them to be, but you do not see them going up and down the country saying they are not paid sufficiently for what they do. If they have any complaints they are immediately remedied by their followers to whom they administer religion. The truth of the matter is that the Church has been in the habit of looking to the State to assist it. The right hon. Gentleman who introduced this Bill had the courage to refer to the voluntary contributions of the Church of England, and it appears that during the last 14 years this wealthy Church, to which the nobility and the wealthy belong, has given £2,000,000 to—

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY
(Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, F.):

Mr. Samuel Evans.

That was one particular form of contribution.

*MR. SAMUEL EVANS: I assume the right hon. Gentleman chose the particular form of donation which suited his case best.

MR. LONG: I referred to a special endowment, which was one particular form. I understood the Leader of the Opposition to charge the Church of England with not having put their hands into their pockets for one particular purpose, and I was referring to that particular purpose.

*MR. SAMUEL EVANS: The particular purpose we are dealing with now is the question of increasing the incomes of the clergy, and I have not heard that the Church of England have provided funds for that purpose. Is it not fair, when the Nonconformists of the country maintain their own religion, and maintain in a respectable manner their own ministers, to ask that this rich Church should have recourse to its own funds? This Government have been forced by their clerical supporters to come to the House, and they are bold enough to take out of the public funds moneys for the support of their own religion which they ought to contribute themselves. They are unjust to the rest of the community, and the adherents of the Church are unworthy in their willingness to receive such a grant.

*SIR FREDERICK MILNER (Nottinghamshire, Bassetlaw): I rise to offer my warmest and most hearty support to the Government in their endeavour to do a somewhat tardy act of justice to the tithe-owning clergy by the introduction of this Bill. The only fault I could find would be that they have too long delayed the redressing of a grievous injustice. For my own part, I have always thought that it was a pity that the question of the rating of the tithe-owning clergy was not taken in hand at the same time as the rating of agricultural land; it would have been better if the Government had made only one bite at the cherry instead of two. It is reasonable that we should expect this Bill to meet with the vehement opposition of the Radical party. Any attempt to do justice to the clergy of the Church of England has the same effect

upon them as the waving of a red cloth before the eyes of an infuriated bull. It has been said that it is a scandalous act on the part of the Government to introduce this Bill at a comparatively late period of the session. There would have been some considerable force in that argument if the Bill were of a complicated character, with a number of contentious clauses, requiring a long time for discussion, such as the London Government Bill, the Education Bill, or the original Agricultural Rating Bill. Certainly it would have been both wrong and foolish for the Government to have attempted to bring in a Bill of that nature, but the contentious part of this Bill consists practically of one line, and I contend that every legitimate argument that could be produced by the most zealous advocate for or against the Bill could be repeated at least 20 times in the space of one week. It is therefore, most childish and absurd to bring forward this accusation against the Government, and the mere fact that such a plea has been brought forward proves that our opponents have a very weak case. The Leader of the Opposition, on a previous occasion, insinuated that the reason for suddenly urging this measure forward was because the Government were afraid of losing the votes of the clergy. I think it is a matter of regret that ever since the right hon. Gentleman was chosen as the temporary chief of the Radical Party he should have thought it necessary in almost every speech he has made to allege against his opponents the basest and most sordid motives for their actions. It is an evil example to set to a Party, and it is one which I am proud to think will never be followed by the Leader of the present Government in the House. In the present case such an accusation is as absurd as it is unjust. It is true that certain of the clergy have written very foolish letters to the Press; but I would fearlessly assert, knowing something of the clergy, that as a body they are far too noble-minded men to allow, for one moment, their own personal interests to interfere with their duty in promoting what they conceive to be the best interests of the Church they so loyally serve. As a matter of fact, nobody knows better than the Government that the introduction of this Bill is far more likely to lose than to win votes, if for no other reason than that it affords a magnificent opportunity to the Radical

Party, of which they have not been slow to avail themselves, of exercising the wonderful powers of misrepresentation with which Providence has so liberally endowed them. It has been clearly shown that this Bill has been brought in simply because the Government has felt that it is a measure of justice which they are bound, if possible, to pass. I have sufficient confidence in my fellow-countrymen to believe that when the measure has been properly and truthfully explained to them they will recognise the justice of it and approve the action of the Government in introducing the Bill. It has also been asserted that the real reason for the introduction of the measure is to compensate the clergy for the losses they have sustained through the serious reduction in the value of their tithe rent-charge, and that this loss should be made good by the members of their own Church, and not by the State. It is perfectly true that the tithe-owning clergy have suffered severely in that respect, and that in only too many cases their incomes have been reduced to less than a living wage. It is also perfectly true that it is the duty of Churchmen to put their hands into their pockets to relieve the terrible distress brought about by the decrease in the value of the tithe rent-charge. Churchmen in the past have contributed magnificently for their churches and schools; they educated the children of the country long before the State ever thought it its duty to interest itself in a question of such vital importance. Large sums have already been contributed to increase the incomes of the clergy, and I have no doubt that when Churchmen realise the absolute insufficiency of the incomes of many of the clergy the necessary amount to enable our clergy to live in decent comfort will be forthcoming. But this Bill has nothing whatever to do with the impoverished condition of the clergy. It is simply brought in to relieve the clergy of an injustice which is admitted by every fair-minded man who has taken the trouble to master the facts of the case. The case of the tithe-owning clergy is a peculiarly hard one. They are called upon to pay rates which fall on no other professional man and on no other citizen in the country, and their expenses have been added to considerably by the passing of the Agricultural Rating Act, in the benefits of which they should have had a reasonable and fair share.

Further than that, for the purposes of taxation, tithe-rent charge is regarded as agricultural land, but for rating purposes it is a hereditament not being agricultural land, and is so charged the full rate, which is manifestly unfair. In the evidence given before the Royal Commissioners it seems to be very doubtful whether tithe was ever intended to pay rates at all, but unfortunately the expense involved is so great that no clergyman has ever yet ventured to test the legality of rating tithe. Certain it is that no professional man and no other minister of religion is rated on his income. But the clergy do not at present even ask that their income should not be rated, and this Bill does not contemplate relieving them of paying the rates on their income. They simply ask that as their income derived from the tithe-rent charge is regarded and charged as agricultural land, the same relief which was given to the tenants of agricultural land should be accorded to them. Surely that is a very simple and reasonable request, and one which this House ought to grant without delay. A great many of those who are opposing this Bill do not really understand the simple nature of it. It is simply carrying out the almost unanimous Report of the Royal Commissioners, and the mere fact that that Commission thought it right and just that this relief should be given ought to have very considerable weight in the House. The great point which has been made against granting this small concession is the assertion that at the time of the commutation of the tithe an addition was made to the commutation to represent the rates. It is asserted that at the time of the commutation of tithes a sum equal to the amount of the rates then paid upon the tithe was specially added to the estimated average value of the tithe, in order to enable the owner of the new tithe rent-charge to pay the rates for the future, and that the total of the average tithe, plus the sum thus added, was fixed upon the lands in each parish as the commuted tithe rent-charge. That statement, which is absolutely unfounded, has been answered over and over again. I cannot put it better than has been done by the Secretary of the Tithe Rent-charge Owners' Union :

"The Commissioners appointed under the Act of 1836 had instructions how to proceed in various cases. These may be classified as three: (1) Tithe, owner collected tithe in kind.

Sir. Frederick Milner.

Here deduction for cost of marketing, etc., was directed. (2) Composition with owner or occupier, who paid fixed annual sum in lieu of tithe. Commissioners were directed to take such sum as the clear annual value. In both these cases the tithe-owner remained liable to pay rates, and Commissioners directed not to make any deductions from such rates. (3) Composition with landowner or occupier, as 1 and 2, for fixed annual sum, but to be free of all rates, which were to be paid by the landowner or occupier, the composition being so much less. Commissioners directed to make such addition to annual value as would represent rates, thus merely replacing what had been before subtracted."

To give an instance of the way this was carried out, I will quote the case of two livings. One of them is Burston, in Norfolk. The net amount of tithes or composition was £470; the aggregate amount of tithes or composition and rates, £470; rent-charge, £470.

"Here the Tithe Commissioners found that the net value of the tithe received by the rector during the seven years preceding Christmas, 1835, after deducting cost of marketing, etc., averaged £470 per annum. They also found that the rector himself paid the rates whatever the sum received by him."

But in the case of Halstead, in Essex, we have the net amount of tithes or composition, £892; rates, when paid by landowners, £537; aggregate amount of tithes or composition and rates, £1,430; and the rent-charge £1,350.

"Here the Tithe Commissioners found that the rector had entered into an arrangement with the tithe-payers that they should pay the rates, and should pay him a lesser sum as a composition for the tithe than they otherwise would have done. As a consequence of this arrangement, in the seven years preceding Christmas, 1835, the tithe-payers paid on behalf of the rector rates averaging £537 1s. 7½d., and also paid to the rector in respect of the composition an average sum of £892 18s. 4½d. The Tithe Commissioners, in order to arrive at the actual value of the tithes of Halstead, therefore added together the sums in columns 1 and 2, and inserted the total amount to £1,430 in col. 3. They then fixed the commuted rent-charge of the parish at £1,350, or £80 less than they had found the average value of the tithes to be. It is perfectly clear that in no case was any additional sum added to the tithe to enable the tithe-owner to pay the rates."

That is a very clear explanation of the charge that a considerable sum was added to the value of the tithe rent-charge. As far as my constituency is concerned, I have gone into the question of a very large number of livings, and I find that in no case was a single penny

added. Here are men with incomes averaging from £180 to £220 a year, who are actually being charged no less than 5s. in the £ on their miserable income, and nobody can say that it is a right or fair thing that such a man, who works hard for his living, should have to pay so very much more than any other citizen in the United Kingdom has to pay upon the income which he receives. I have read that the Government will find that many of their supporters are not in love with this measure, and that it is by no means certain that they will receive the support they expect. I think that will be found to be a fancy, and that the vast majority of those behind the Government will give a loyal and hearty support to this Bill. I trust the Leader of the House will make up his mind that this measure shall be placed upon the Statute Book this session. He has always allowed free and ample discussion on measures before the House, and I hope that if that free and ample discussion is exceeded, and obstructive tactics are adopted, he will use every power the House allows him to insist that this Bill shall be got through this session.

MR. GEORGE WHITELEY (Stockport): At the outset, I desire the House to make allowance for and to pity the sorrows of the poor distressed borough politician, and I may be pardoned if I commit an act of Parliamentary bad taste by making a personal reflection. In the year 1895, when this House was elected, and when this Government occupied their present position, I had reached a presumably respectable middle-age. In the midst of a busy populace, where politics are matters of every-day concern, I occupied the best part of my years in endeavouring to combat with all the energy, vigour, and vehemence of which I was capable, in season and out of season, the assertion so frequently made on Liberal platforms, that the Conservative Party had never been, and never could be, the Party of the working classes, but that they were essentially and entirely the Party of the landlord, the squire, and the parson. I have no doubt that many hon. Members who have spoken on this side erred in the same manner. I did not fight the recent election from any platform of heroic measures, but from a platform of domestic working-class measures of progress and

reform, all tending to ameliorate the lot of those who live in the populous centres of our country. Upon that programme we were elected, and may I ask the House to consider and to bear with me a few moments while I enumerate the measures which we have passed in this Parliament, and while I show how we have failed to make our pledges good. The first session opened in 1896, and the bill was set a-rolling with the Cattle Diseases Bill, which was nothing else but a protective measure for the meat producers of this country, for it prohibited the importation of live cattle beyond the seaports of this country. The other Bill of that session was, to my thinking, a Bill which was the most unjust and unfair measure that was ever engrossed upon the Statute Book of this country—I allude to the Agricultural Rating Act, which gave two millions a year to the landlords. That money was given to the landed interest of this country, and that was, therefore, a landlord or a squire session. I am aware that there are disputes as to whose pockets this money has gone into. I am aware that hon. Members on this side say that the tenants have got the benefit of that money, but I am prepared to show that the landlords either have got the benefit or are ultimately bound to get it. Rates are a charge upon the property and are indivisible from it, and whatever you do to reduce the rates you, *pro tanto*, do as much to increase the selling or letting value. The second session was that of the year 1897, when we immediately proceeded in a most generous manner to busy ourselves by voting £600,000 to the Voluntary schools, which went chiefly to the parsons, and that smacks of a parson's session. There was, however, one Bill for the working classes, and that was the Compensation for Injury Bill; and here, again, I claim that that Bill shows the characteristic inability of those on this side of the House and of this Government to deal fairly and equitably between the interests of town and country; because by that Bill, while compensation for injury was thought to be a good enough principle for the towns, where it would fall upon manufacturers, the landlords in the country would not touch it with the end of a 40-foot pole. In the third session we had the Irish Local Government Bill, where we again voted £750,000 to the Irish landlords.

*MR. SPEAKER : Order, order ! The hon. Member cannot enter into a general discussion upon all the measures passed during the present Parliament. The reference to the Agricultural Rating Bill was in order, but this prolonged general discussion upon the measures passed during recent sessions by this Parliament is not in order, and does not come within the scope of the Bill now before the House.

MR. GEORGE WHITELEY : I was only endeavouring to show that the funds which have been given to these various interests during previous sessions might have been better employed making good our pledges to the electors, and forming a nucleus for an old age pension scheme, rather than employing it in the manner in which it has been spent. I will come now to the present Bill. This Bill seems to me to present all the worst features of the Agricultural Rating Bill, because, in addition to giving a dole to a special class, it arouses religious animosities and inflames and excites sectarian jealousies in a manner in which they have not been excited for generations past. Are these measures which I have enumerated sound English politics ? Are they not rather an importation of the very worst form of American politics, and a system which smacks of "the spoils for the victor." We got into office upon certain specific pledges, and we have spent all our money in subsidising certain classes of our own particular supporters. I ask, Where does the working man come in ? Where does the borough elector and the taxpayer come in, and where is he going to come in ? He seems to have been allotted the important function only of finding practically the whole of the money. I ask if in prosecuting these measures in the House of Commons the Government are dealing fairly with the borough representatives in this House ? Are they playing the game as between borough interests and the agricultural and clerical interest ? I do not know whether it has ever struck hon. Members to inquire as to where the present Government obtained its majority from. I think if you divide up the Members of this House according to whether they sit for borough or county constituencies, you will find that those in opposition and those in favour of the Government are almost equal amongst the country

members ; whereas the majority for the Government comes almost entirely from the boroughs. Is this Government, which represents those parties and which ought to be impartial, by this Bill evenly holding the balance between the different sections which go to make up this majority ? Is the Government not rather in every act and deed surrendering the interests of the borough taxpayer to those two allied kindred interests, the landlords and the clergymen ? I ask hon. Members on this side of the House to put themselves in the place of borough Members who won the suffrages of their constituencies upon this social and working-class programme. How are we to go out and fight your battle in the boroughs when you have treated the boroughs in this manner ? What shall we have to say ? We shall have to say, "We did make a vast number of promises, but we found when we got into office that the money would not run to it, and, naturally, we had to look after the interests of ourselves first, and possibly you may have been neglected ; but put us in again and we may redeem our promises." I ask, Is that a proper position to put borough Members in at the present time, when they can only go on the platform to receive the buffetings of their opponents ? I want to ask this House, does it think for a moment that in passing this measure it will be doing any good permanently to the Church of England ? Let us place ourselves for a moment in the position of a Nonconformist and a Dissenter, who sees the money to which he is called upon to contribute being taken away from him and employed in paying the rates of the clergy of a very different Church to his own. Do you think for a moment that any Nonconformist in this House will be content to accept, either permanently or temporarily, such a situation and such a position ? You are imposing an intolerable grievance upon the Nonconformists of this country by this measure. Don't you think that when the Liberal Party come back to office—an event which you are hastening by this legislation—composed of 75 per cent. of Dissenters, they will take immediate steps to reverse such a colossal injustice as this measure will be ? But you are doing more than this, for you are, in a sense, pauperising the Church of England. How many times has it been our proud boast upon platforms, in support of Church defence,

to claim that never in the history of the Church has the Church of England had one penny from the State; that the Church was antecedent to the State, and that it was even more true to say that the Church had established the State. But you can never make that boast again after this proposal, for you are now dragging your Church through the mire, and you are doing this in order to secure a paltry, petty sum of £87,000 a year for three years. I say for three years, because you may be sure of this, that no other Parliament not possessing such a vast majority will ever re-enact or continue such an injustice as this. Were ever such fatuous tactics pursued before by any Party? Why, you are practically giving your Church away with a pound of tea, if I may be allowed to use the expression. It has been said that the clergy are rated upon the whole of the income which they receive. That, however, is not so, and no one knows it better than my hon. friend who has just spoken from this side of the House, because there are certain deductions to be made before the rateable value is assessed. May I point out that the clergy of the Church of England never had any right when presented to their livings to exact anything but the net amount of the tithe. Perhaps I may be allowed here to read a few sentences from a letter which I received from a gentleman who was a fellow of one of the colleges of Oxford for a period of 14 years, and his opinion is put as succinctly as any opinion could possibly be. First of all he speaks of this tithe measure as increasing the value of advowsons. He says:

"It rests on a misapprehension of the whole position of the tithe-owner, whether incumbent or not; that part of the tithe rent-charge which goes to local taxation is no more the property of the tithe-owner than the rent-charge itself is the property of the landowner. An incumbent who has interest with a patron, is presented to a benefice on certain conditions, viz., that if he performs certain duties he shall receive the net value of so much tithe rent-charge, and also the other emoluments of the benefice (surplice fees, Easter dues, the value of a parsonage and grounds, and glebe farms in general forming parts of such emoluments). On what possible grounds can he claim the gross value of the tithe as his professional income? If he does the Income Tax Acts prove that he is wrong, for the Act of 1853 provides that before assessing to income tax sums received for tithe rent-charge all amounts paid for local taxation shall be deducted. The assertion in this morning's *Standard* that tithe rent-charge is assessed for local taxation at its

nominal value, and not at its actual value, is absolutely untrue."

In a postscript the same writer says:

"I was for 14 years a fellow of New College, Oxford, and my fellowship would have been £50 a year more but for the fact that the College had to pay rates on its tithe, but I did not then, and do not now contend that I paid that £50 a year."

In the speech made by the right hon. Gentleman upon introducing this measure, he said that in some cases the clergy paid 20 per cent. of their incomes in rates. But even if that were true, I can show you plenty of cases in towns where property has depreciated in value to a much larger extent. There are plenty of cases in every town where a poor man has invested his money in a few cottages, where that property has depreciated in value and the rates have gone up, and when the expenses of the maintenance of that property have been met he does not receive very often either 25 or 50 per cent., or even anything at all, on the gross rental. I quite agree with the hon. Member for Stroud that we ought to have equality in all these ratings, but what I contend is that you ought not to take one or two particular interests, and apply this money to reducing the rates upon these particular interests, without treating the other ratepayers of the country upon the same footing. I am as sorry as anybody else to hear that the clergy are suffering, but the remedy for that is undoubtedly what has been already laid down, and that is that it is the business of the richest Church in the world to subscribe its millions or tens of millions, if necessary, for this purpose, when we see Nonconformists doing this on behalf of their own church; for it should be the business of the Church of England to pay for its own religion and pay its own way. The Rating Bill was a bad Bill, and this measure carries on the principle of the Rating Bill. We could, however, have made a fight against the Rating Bill if the Government had remained quiet, for the average elector has a short memory; but by this measure you are now raking the whole thing up again, and you are making it infinitely worse by taking this money from the ratepayer instead of from the taxpayer, for you are levying this burden upon a body who are infinitely worse off than the imperial tax.

payer. If you had left things alone we might have been able to gloss matters over by talking about the foreign policy of the Government, and we might have had a chance in the boroughs. But the present Bill has revealed the true state of things to all the world, and all for a sum of £87,000 for three years—a sum which I will be bound to say, if the right hon. Gentleman had appealed to his own Party in Parliament, there are ten Members on this side of the House who would have found the money for him rather than have had a Bill like this presented to the House. I am afraid that in these matters I am somewhat of an idealist, and my great ideal in times past of the Conservative and Unionist Party has been that it should maintain and preserve all the great institutions of this country, that it should be Imperialist in foreign politics, and that it should defend the rights of private property by a wise and judicious alliance with the democracy of this country—an alliance which should be cemented and maintained by the Unionist Party showing that they are as ready to give every measure of reasonable social democratic reform as their opponents are. But that ideal has been shattered and taken from me. I will not pretend that I am disconsolate in consequence, but there is one crowning act of folly which I have not yet been guilty of. I will not cry “Peace, peace!” when to me, politically speaking, there is no peace; and I will not pretend before this House and the country that all is for the best in the best of possible worlds, when I see my Party and the Government, which I have supported the whole of my life, introducing measures similar to this measure under discussion—measures which to my mind are mischievous and wrong in their nature and character, and which must inevitably bring disaster and ruin in their consequence and in their after effect. Sir, I say that this is a bad Bill, and it is a bad Bill because it is an unfair and an unjust Bill. It is a bad Bill because it takes the money of the community and applies it to special purposes, and to paying the debts of a particular class of gentlemen. The measure is wrong and unjust from beginning to end, and so sick and sorry do I feel with this one continual stream of the surrender and betrayal of the interests of the ratepayers and the taxpayers, and the interests of the whole

community to benefit particular classes in this country; and so weary am I of always being at loggerheads with my Party upon these perennial questions of doles that come up every year, that there is no course left open to me but to resign the position I hold here, and to resign that position after pointing out the great demerits of the legislation of the Government in these respects. In the case of this particular measure, I may say that I never more proudly gave a vote in this House than I shall against the Second Reading of this Bill.

CAPTAIN PRETYMAN (Suffolk, Woodbridge): The hon. Member who has just sat down has complained that when he faced his constituency he was severely buffeted. I can only hope that the buffeting which he received from his opponents was not more severe than that which he has just administered to his friends on this side of the House. We all know that the hon. Member has the courage of his opinions, and if he really believes that this measure is a dole to any particular class of persons whatsoever out of the State money at the expense of the other members of the community, the action which he has taken will be amply justified. But I maintain that no such question arises upon this Bill at all. There is no question whatever arises of money being voted from one part of the community to give a dole to another part. There is only one form of dole which is legally recognised in this country, and that is the dole which is obtained through the medium of the Poor Law. What we have to do in considering this Bill is to separate first of all the cause for which this grant is to be given, and secondly the reason for voting this money now. The first point has already been dealt with very ably by the right hon. Gentleman who introduced the Bill, and also by the hon. Member for the Stroud Division of Gloucester, whose arguments have shown that this Bill is simply a matter of relieving a burden which is unfairly borne by a certain section of the community. Hon. Gentlemen opposite have stated that there is no particular hardship in this case, but not one single instance has been adduced where any class or any single person in the community is rated upon his property or income in the same manner as the clergy of the Church of England are rated at this moment. I will quote one instance

Mr. George Whiteley.

and ask hon. Gentlemen if they can contradict it. I think it may be shown that a clergyman pays rates upon the same class of property. Take the case of the parsonage grants under Queen Anne's bounty. This property is rated to the full value, and no deduction whatever is allowed for those repayments. Therefore I maintain that the clergyman is paying rates first of all upon the property itself, and secondly upon the money as he pays off the debt. Can right hon. Gentlemen opposite quote one single case where any other member of the community pays rates twice upon the same property? I am perfectly certain that they cannot. In this Bill we are simply claiming that there is a sum of money now being paid in the form of rates which was never intended to be paid upon property of that description. We go back to the year 1601, when rating was first imposed, and when there was a great principle enunciated, from which we have never yet departed, and that was that people should pay rates according to their ability to pay. I think if you compare the ability of clergymen to pay with other sections of the community, it can be proved that the clergy are paying four times as much towards the rates as other people who are in receipt of similar incomes. Therefore, I do not see how it can be claimed that the burden of the clergy in regard to local taxation is at all proportionate to the rest of the community. In this respect I do not think the argument of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Fife was germane to the question. The right hon. Gentleman said that this is a dole, and that this money should be contributed by the wealthy members of the Church. That argument appears very much like a case in which you are able to prove definitely that a certain tradesman has overcharged you, and when you ask him to return the money he says to you, "Oh, no; I cannot return you this money. You are pretty well off yourself, and you have got some rich relations, and you had better go to them and ask for the return of this money which I have overcharged you." This is not a Church question at all, but it is a question of taxation between citizen and citizen. If you owe a man money you have to pay him, and you will not succeed in any court of justice by saying that the man to whom you owe the debt is very

well off and can do without it, and therefore the argument of my right hon. friend in this respect falls to the ground. This is a question of returning money which has been illegally levied, and the question of the poverty of the clergy does not enter into the matter at all. This is a debt due from the community, and the argument that the taxpayer will find the money and the ratepayer will lose it does not apply. This is the principle of the measure itself, because in this case the taxpayers have stolen the money and the ratepayers have received it. One is the stealer and the other is the receiver, and by this Bill you are simply making restitution of the money which has been improperly taken. If this money had been and was being illegally taken from persons who could afford to wait, then perhaps we should be justified in yielding to the argument of the Member for East Fife—that it would be unjust to deal with this question in part, and that these particular individuals ought to wait until the whole question was dealt with. But if you are able to show that a very large number of these persons are paying a very unjust sum, which the taxpayer is taking from them without any moral right whatever, and which has never been explicitly sanctioned by this House, and which the judges only exact on purely technical grounds, I say that you are justified in dealing with the case of these clergymen immediately. We ought to remember that this money is being extracted from people whose incomes are no greater, and in hundreds of cases are less, than the incomes of those mechanics working in the boroughs to which the hon. Member for Stockport has referred. I think it is to the credit of the Government that they have decided to go forward with this measure, even if they risk losing the support of the hon. Member for Stockport and his friends, even if they lose popularity. This Act is purely one to do an act of justice and right, and that will be to the credit and honour of the Government; for it is better to do right for its own sake, even if you have to suffer for it, than to seek a cheap popularity in order that you may not lose a by-election here and there. In the diocese of Norwich the bishop stated that there were 73 beneficed clergymen in that diocese whose incomes were less than £100. Now I think my hon. friend will agree with me that a large majority of the

mechanics in the division which he represents are in receipt of incomes of over £100 a year. Hon. Gentlemen opposite have stated that they want to strip off this Bill its clerical vestments. I want also to strip off the clerical vestments of the Church, but this has nothing to do with the Church at all. It is simply a question of doing an act of justice to Citizen A, who is paying an undue proportion of the taxes as compared with B. Whether that citizen is a clergyman, or whatever he is, makes no difference, for he has a right to be relieved of that burden. Hon. Gentlemen opposite may think this is an opportune time to attack this question, because it is the only subject which they have been able to unite upon for a long time. They appear to have forgotten that it was only in the year 1897, upon the motion of the Member for one of the divisions of Essex, that this House unanimously, without a Division, passed a Resolution that these clergymen were overtaxed and ought to be relieved. May I ask the hon. Member for Stockport if he allowed that Vote to pass without challenging it, and did he support that Resolution?

MR. GEORGE WHITELEY: I have no recollection of that Resolution, but if I had supported it I should have coupled with it a condition that it should apply to all ratepayers, for I claim that all real property should be dealt with at one time.

CAPTAIN PRETYMAN: The hon. Member says that real property is overtaxed, but there are enormous incomes in this country which escape the tax collector altogether, and many of them also escape the rate collector. I quite agree that it would have been much preferable to have dealt with this question as a whole instead of this particular aspect of it. This, however, is a recognised grievance upon which a unanimous vote of this House has been given. I noticed that while some parts of the hon. Member for Stockport's speech were loudly cheered by Members on the opposite side of the House, his statement that a future Liberal Government would reverse this measure was not cheered so vociferously. My own opinion is that neither my hon. friend nor his friends on the other side of the House will ever dare to repeal this measure until a more com-

Captain Pretymman.

prehensive Bill on this question is brought in. This measure professes to say, "Here is a growing injustice which has been acknowledged by this House. This is not an absolute remedy, but it is within the mark of what is fair and just between these particular ratepayers and the other ratepayers of the country." I think that the ratepayers and taxpayers generally will look upon this proposal as a fair one. It has been argued that the clergy accepted their duties subject to this burden, but it is not much consolation to tell a man with £70 a year that his predecessor got £130. At this very moment this burden is being imposed upon the clergy, and they have been protesting against it in season and out of season for a great number of years. What is more, they have carried case after case into the courts of law to show that this burden was being improperly borne by them. Ever since 1836 they have protested that this was an unjust burden. I will not deal with the argument that a part of the rates was added to the tithe, but I will use one illustration which strikes me as rather germane to the question—namely, that each benefice got by that means simply the gross amount of tithe actually liable for rates, and what was added in certain cases was merely the replacing of what, as a matter of convenience, had been subtracted from the total which was liable for rates. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouth, and many other hon. Members on the other side of the House, have claimed that the income tax payer is entitled to relief at the hands of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and they claimed in attacking the Budget proposals that it was unfair and unjust that a professional man should be paying so large a sum as 8d. in the £ on incomes of over £700 a year. Now, I maintain that you cannot separate rating from taxation. In this case the Government show that a certain class of ratepayers are paying, not 8d. in the £ on incomes over £700, but 3s., 4s., 5s., and even 6s. in the £ upon incomes of less than £100 a year. And the very same hon. Gentlemen who advocate relief to the income tax payer, absolutely deny any form of relief to these clergymen, and they deny that there is any injustice in the case of a ratepayer who is paying a tax which is six or seven times as hard as the income tax. Upon this matter the Government have approached the question simply with a desire to do

justice to one particular class of the community, simply because they are paying an unjust and unfair burden of taxation. It is simply a question of taxation where one man is paying more and another less than his share. It is simply a question of remedying an injustice; but in this the hon. Members opposite see an opportunity for making a little political capital in the country, and so they have decided to oppose this Bill tooth and nail. Personally, I am content to leave the issue to the country, and I am confident that, though hon. Gentlemen opposite may derive some small temporary political advantage from this measure, when this question comes to be judged on its merits history will say, and the country will say, that we have done right, and that hon. Gentlemen opposite have not improved the reputation of their Party by this partisan opposition.

MR. BILLSON (Halifax): The hon. Member for Stroud, in his energetic and eloquent speech, raised the question as to why we should complain of the matter being brought forward piecemeal, and he took credit to the Government for being prepared to deal with injustices as they arose. He said we must begin somewhere, and why should we not begin with the clergy. Since the last election we have heard a great deal of talk in the country about the way in which it was won. On this side we have endeavoured to point out that the election was won by the unholy alliance of two or three privileged interests, and we predicted that the Government would reward those interests if they were returned to power. We did not think that our suspicions would be verified so soon, but they have been verified by doles to the landlords and the Voluntary schools, and now there is a dole to the clergy in this Bill. I should have thought that if any benefit was to be given to the clergy as a class, it would have been far wiser and more simple if the rates and taxes upon the vicarages and parsonages had been remitted. But if that had been done it would have immediately raised the question whether other bodies ought not to have the advantage of some reduction also. Even among their own supporters, during the last few months, there have been most serious complaints as to the attitude of the Government. There was a letter from a clergyman, in which he said that

he would withdraw from the Conservative Association, because he considered that the Government had not done what they could on this very question. The Liberal victories which have been achieved lately were contributed to by this dissatisfaction. It is ill-omened that two great classes in the country—the brewers and the clergy of the Established Church—make their private interests their politics, and insist that when a Government comes into office it should be to benefit the people who put them there. We hear enough of the taxes put upon property by the Liberal Government; but the only sort of tax which the Tory party seem to consider of importance is the tax on the masses of the people for the benefit of the privileged classes. I noticed that immediately after the East Edinburgh election the defeated candidate rather scoffed at the electorate, because, he said, they had been led away by cupidity and by the promises of the successful candidate. Now, these promises were nothing but suggestions of a general rearrangement of taxation, so that the burden might fall fairly on all classes of the community. I am one of those who think that no Christian church flourishes on endowments. Wherever you come across a Nonconformist church that has a small endowment, there you will generally find that the spiritual life is dead. The spiritual life of a congregation depends upon how people throw themselves into the affairs of the church, and if there is a debt to be paid off or new work to do you get the people bound together by an amount of energy and spiritual fervour which is never found wherever the income is provided by others. It is a matter of surprise to us that the Church of England does not realise this. It should have the courage of its opinions in these matters. I remember Mr. Gladstone, when addressing a meeting for obtaining funds for a Missionary Bishop, pointed out the enormous amount of reserve which the Church of England had at its back, and said that if the Church could really rise to a due sense of its duty there would be no poverty amongst the clergy, and plenty of money for all other purposes. For some of these reasons I strongly oppose this Bill. I suppose it will be passed by the Government with their great majority; but it will redound to the discredit of the Government and the humiliation of the Church.

***MR. LOYD** (Berks, Abingdon): I intend to support this Bill, not because I am a member of the Church to which the clergy belong, some of whom will be benefited by it, but in spite of that fact, and because the whole of the arguments seem to me to be in favour of the relief to be given, whereas only topics of prejudice seem to be on the other side. The speech in which the right hon. Gentleman moved the rejection of this Bill was marked by his usual ability and acuteness, but it seemed to me that that ingenuity and acuteness were nowhere more cleverly displayed than in the manner in which he carefully kept in the background what is really the groundwork of this Bill. The very able lead which he gave to his followers has been adopted by them, and from first to last, in all the speeches which I have heard directed against this Bill, I have not heard one single attempt to meet this question, "Are the clergy of the Church of England assessed upon a wrong and unjust basis for their rates?" The whole assumption on the other side has been that the complaint is merely as to the amount of the rates that they justly have to pay; that their poverty has been brought in as a make-weight in support of their claim for relief from a burden which, though just, is irksome to them; and that the other members of the Church to which they belong, who ought to help them, are hanging back and endeavouring to give them assistance in supporting themselves and their families by putting their hands into the pockets of the ratepayers and taxpayers of the country. Now, from first to last, there is no suggestion in all these speeches that the real complaint is as to the method upon which the clergy are assessed. Yet that is the real question, and the mere amount is immaterial except as an index of the unjust method by which such startling results are arrived at. If the method is found upon examination to be unjust, then I take it there could be no justification whatever for a party, however opposed it may be to the Church, to bring their ingenuity to bear in order to prevent the clergy from getting the injustice remedied. Another feature in the presentation of this case by the opponents of the Bill is that it is represented as a sudden trick, sprung upon the country by the Unionist Party, with a view of remunerating their political supporters at the last election. Well,

would anybody dream from that statement that this is a complaint which has been outstanding in its present form for sixty years, that it was acknowledged by the Poor Law Commissioners long before the Unionist Party was ever heard of, that it was endorsed by Sir George Cornwall Lewis, that it has the high sanction of Mr. Gladstone himself, and that the clergy themselves, for all those years, have been perpetually pointing to the fact that they were being assessed upon an erroneous or, at all events, upon an unjust basis? These few facts alone seem to me to demolish and pulverise the insinuations by which it has been sought on the other side of the House to obscure the reason of the country upon this question. This is not a question merely of the poverty of the clergy. It is not a bare question of the amount that they pay in their rates. It is not a new matter invented by the present Government for election purposes. It is a matter which has been open to the inspection of all who have taken the trouble to look into it for the last sixty years. But it has the misfortune to be a singularly dry subject, and therefore it repels close inquiry, and affords a much more ready opportunity for creating prejudice and stirring up hatred and malice amongst the creeds into which this country is unhappily divided. If we on this side of the House, therefore, have to face all that obloquy and all those unjust insinuations, it becomes necessary, in self-defence, that I should trouble the House for a few minutes by attempting to show what in my judgment is the injustice from which the clergy suffer, and how that injustice has arisen. So far from concealing our intention, we have tried over and over again to bring the matter before the House, but on each occasion, either the history of rating has been ruled by you, Sir, to be irrelevant, or when efforts have been made in the form of questions to Ministers to ventilate this grievance, it has been impossible within the limits of a question and answer that any complete estimate of the subject should be given. Therefore I must ask the indulgence of the House while I endeavour to point out that in the original rating Act of Elizabeth, beyond which it is unnecessary to go, wherever tithes were employed as the stipend of the clergy, the nature of those tithes was recognised to be distinct in kind from the nature of all other

tithes. And the reason is not far to seek. The tithes which were used to remunerate the clergy for their services and to provide for their support were not land in any sense of the term. Many of them were in no way connected with the land, but consisted of the produce of animals or the result of industry, and even where they were derived from the land they were, before becoming tithes, severed from the land. So far they resembled other tithes. But unlike other tithes they were a stipend, to be earned. Moreover, these tithes so severed from the land or treated as produce were personalty, and the right to receive them not being the subject of devise nor inheritance, as was the case with impropriate tithes, they were so recognised in the Statute Book, and were treated, not as hereditaments, which could be occupied, but as mere personalty, the profits received by the parson as an inhabitant of the parish. The Statute of Elizabeth, if it covers clerical tithes at all, recognises this distinction, as will be seen from its first section, which provides :

"That the overseers are to raise 'by taxation of every inhabitant, parson, vicar, and other, and of every occupier of land, houses, tithes impropriate, appropriations of tithes, coal mines, or saleable underwoods in the said parish,' a stock of flax and other necessary stuff to set the poor on work, and also competent sums of money for the relief of the lame," and so forth.

Now that clearly marks out for taxation two classes—first, the inhabitant, whether he be parson, vicar, or other; and, secondly, every occupier of land, houses, and tithes other than tithes annexed to a benefice. It was under the former head, that of "inhabitants," that personal property was made liable, and remained liable till exempted by the Statute of 1840. It was under the latter head that real property was rendered liable, and still remains liable, to be rated. But although the parson or vicar was thus clearly placed in the former category, as an inhabitant—so that his tithe and his ability to bear taxation in respect thereof should be tested, just as other profits were to be tested, after deducting what it cost him to earn the profits—yet a confusion gradually arose as to the nature of the parson's liability, and, as occupiers of tithes impropriate were mentioned in the latter part of the clause, it seems to have become vaguely supposed that the parson

was liable as the "occupier" of his tithe. With whom this blunder originated is not known, but we know that so high an authority as Dalton's "County Justice," in an edition published some 150 years after the Statute of Elizabeth, is found laying down the doctrine that the parson is rateable on tithe as an occupier. These are the words :

"Every clergyman is to be rated for his glebe and tithes according to their yearly value, so long as they are in his own occupation, because the Statute charges every occupier of tithes."

Now, that, as I shall show very shortly, if the House will allow me to do so, is an entire misapprehension of the Statute. A clergyman's glebe was, of course, realty, and if he was the occupier of the glebe he remained liable under the second head of the Statute of Elizabeth as the occupier of his glebe. But with regard to his tithe, he was rateable under that Statute, if at all, simply and solely as an "inhabitant," and in respect of profits received by him within the parish. The doctrine, so laid down in Dalton, probably in a slovenly moment, has led to incalculable injustice to the clergy of the country, and probably put even lawyers off their inquiry as to the true basis on which tithes were rateable in the parson's hands. And so the matter remained in confusion till a decision of the Court of Appeal in 1885. Certain it is that during all the litigation and legislation which ensued, and which has proved so difficult to harmonise and construe, this misconception of the nature of clerical tithe as a rateable subject matter continued. We find counsel and judges recognising the difficulty which was put upon the parson by treating not only his house and glebe, but also his tithes as ordinary real property. Provisos are introduced into Statutes for his protection as the different commutation and assessment reforms are carried. But such provisos are held to be too vague to carry out the purpose for which they were inserted. The courts apparently are unable to escape from the confusion, and we find the parson getting the worst of it at every encounter. It was not till long after the Commutation Act and the Parochial Assessment Act of 1836, and the Inhabitants Exemption Act, 1840, that we find the blunder in Dalton exposed in a decision to which I will call attention shortly. In the meantime we

have lost sight of the valuable principle of the Statute of Elizabeth, that in estimating the parson's ability to pay rates on his tithes they are to be regarded as profits, and, as profits, only to be ascertained after allowing for what it costs the parson to earn those tithes. I am anxious not to detain the House a moment longer than necessary with Statutes and decisions which have been already referred to, but in order to complete this part of my observations I will pass on to the time when personalty was exempted from rateability. That arose in 1840, in consequence of the decision in the case of the *Queen v. Lumsdaine*, in which it was held by the Court that any rate which did not include the personalty was an invalid rate. There had arisen a practice of the overseers to leave out personalty in their rate because of the great difficulty of ascertaining the gross receipts and deducting the outgoings so as to arrive at the balance of profit, and the practice of leaving out personalty very largely prevailed; but some bold person took the case to the court, and obtained a decision that there had been no release of personalty from liability to be rated under the Statute of Elizabeth, and that every rate which did not include the personalty was an invalid rate. Upon that the manufacturers of the country became alarmed, and their spokesman, Sir Robert Peel, called the attention of the Government of the day to the serious consequences which would ensue if this decision were not at once met by legislation. In calling attention to the matter in this House, in May, 1840, Sir Robert Peel referred to a circular of the Poor Law Commissioners which had been issued a few months previously, in which the Commissioners gave notice that since the *Queen v. Lumsdaine*, there remained no longer any doubt as to the liability of stock in trade to be rated, and that every rate might be successfully appealed against if any inhabitant having productive stock-in-trade were not rated for it. The circular proceeded to deal with the result of the decisions as to what method should be adopted in rating stock-in-trade, and pointed out—and this is one of the difficulties which led to stock-in-trade not being rated—that it was not all the productive stock-in-trade which an inhabitant possessed which was liable to be rated. It was only the clear liqui-

dated surplus after payment of all the owner's debts that was liable, and that it was decided, in the *Queen v. White*, that personal property must not be rated at random, and that the overseers must be able to prove its exact amount. Moreover, Lord Mansfield, in another case, laid it down that personal property, for rating purposes, was only

“the surplus after paying the owner's debts and a proper sum for the maintenance of his family, and also other necessary expenses,”

and if a parish officer made a rate not properly apportioning the sum after ascertaining these particulars, that rate was liable to be appealed against just as much as if the property had not been included at all. Such, said Sir Robert Peel, was the present state of the law with respect to an annual impost amounting to £7,000,000, and he thought that by this simple statement he had clearly established the absolute necessity of preventing the confusion that must arise by a distinct declaration of the law. Now, Sir, I have troubled the House with that short account from *Hansard* will be found in the fifty-third volume, column 1,368, because it seems to me to show what deductions the parson's tithe income was entitled to as personalty, if only the true nature of the rateability had been understood. Well, in consequence of the difficulty in which naturally the whole of the rating authorities of the country were placed by their being called upon to find out the precise amount, and to levy the rates at their peril, an urgent appeal was made to get the “inhabitants” under the first branch of the Statute of Elizabeth released from rating altogether. Thereupon Mr. Goulburn, who was an Ecclesiastical Commissioner, and others, including some of the Bishops, made a protest on behalf of the tithe-owning clergy against the release of personalty (or rather all other personalty except that of the parson) from rating, without making some provision for protecting the parsons and the occupiers of realty from undue pressure in consequence. Upon the parsons the exemption of all “inhabitants” except themselves, produced this double hardship. First, there was the hardship suffered by realty generally. This grievance the parson shared in respect of his house and glebe, but there was also the hardship of being himself retained as “an inhabitant” by specia-

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proviso, for it was under this category alone that he was rateable for his tithe. Of course, the passing of the Commutation Act, and the Assessments Acts in 1836, had tended to obliterate the view that his tithe, for rating purposes, was to be dealt with as profits accruing to an "inhabitant" under the Statute of Elizabeth. But I am trying to show how the interests of the clergy in this respect have suffered from forgetting what would have kept up his title to the deductions to which personalty was entitled, viz., "the owner's debts, a proper sum for the maintenance of his family and other necessary expenses." Mr. Goulburn's protests were made. But such was the urgency of that matter, no valid rates being possible throughout the country, that a Bill was rapidly passed through this House exempting all "inhabitants," except the parson, from rateability in respect of the profits of personalty, and that Act, chiefly in consequence of the protests I have mentioned, was made an annual Act, and has remained annual up to the present day, though constant appeals have been made to successive Governments to remedy the inequality it produced. In 1885, the Queen *versus* Christopherson was decided in the Court of Appeal by the late Lord Esher, Lord Justice Lindley, and Lord Justice Cotton. Now these judges had before them the question of the grounds on which the tithe was rateable under the statute of Elizabeth, and they were at first very much puzzled by the passage I have quoted from Dalton, and Lord Justice Lindley, the present Master of the Rolls, after careful examination of the matter historically and legally, pointed out that that passage was a misreading of the Statute of Elizabeth, and probably that blunder was responsible for the greater part of the confusion that had arisen throughout the country. The Court of Appeal, so constituted, pointed out that the parson's liability to rating in respect of his tithe was, after all, as "an inhabitant" under the first branch of the Statute of Elizabeth. If clerical tithe, therefore, was only rateable originally as profits in the hands of the parson, as one of those very "inhabitants" who were released altogether by the Act of 1840, how can it be said that the parson has no grievance when he has been manœuvred out of all those deductions which the Statute of Elizabeth allowed

him, when those very deductions were insisted on by his fellow "inhabitants" to the point of obtaining release altogether from liability, and when the parson alone was, by special proviso, denied the release which the other "inhabitants" obtained, while he was also denied the deductions to which all others in the same category were entitled. It may be said the commutation of his tithe for a rent-charge had in the meantime altered the grounds of his rateability; but if so it all took place by inference and implication, and as I have shown during the period when the erroneous reading of the Statute of Elizabeth in Dalton remained unexposed, and neither counsel nor judges nor legislators took any account of the right which the parson's position as an "inhabitant" under that Act gave him, to have the proper deductions made in the rating of his tithe. But even taking the tithe rent-charge as real property, the Commission finds that it is not allowed fair play upon the present system of assessment. In other rateable property, not the whole gross annual value, but an aliquot part of the whole gross annual value, is taken as the gross estimated rental to start with, and from that certain deductions are allowed. Whereas the whole gross annual value of the tithe is taken as the gross estimated rental to start with, and then, simply because the deductions specified in the Acts as allowable for arriving at the net rateable value do not apply with verbal accuracy to tithe rent-charge, a very meagre list of deductions is allowed off the gross tithe rent-charge to arrive at the rateable value. Moreover, since tithe, by the commutation in 1836, became a fixed quantity so far as improvability by any outlay is concerned, numerous rates have been imposed upon it from which it has derived no increase at all. Whatever the cause, whatever the history of the process, the House has before it a distinct finding of the Royal Commission that the present system is productive of severe inequality to the disadvantage of the parson, and to the advantage of the other ratepayers. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Fife framed some more eloquent periods than I could frame to describe the evil results caused by an anxious struggle for the support of a family to the discharge by the clergy of their duties in what is a high and a sacred calling. But his language, every word of

which I adopt, was applied to poverty which was the result of mere misfortune. We, on this side of the House at least, are satisfied, as the Poor Law Commissioners, and Sir George Cornwall Lewis and Mr. Gladstone were long ago satisfied that there is, in the case of the tithe-owning clergy, a grave injustice in the basis upon which the tithe rent-charge is assessed as compared with the basis adopted for other rateable property. We are confirmed in that belief by the very strong report to that effect made by the Royal Commission now sitting on Local Taxation. We, therefore, feel convinced that in addition to the impediments to the discharge of their duties, which were so powerfully described by the late Home Secretary, the clergy are suffering under an acute sense of injustice. And if to a hard struggle to discharge their duties and meet the incessant calls upon their dwindling incomes, you superadd a sense of injustice in their share of the public burdens; and if that injustice is continued year after year, and their patient waiting is never to be crowned with any measure of relief, then we believe it is not merely a question of impediments and difficulties, but that an attack is made upon their moral qualities and powers of resistance for bearing their misfortunes as they would wish; and that, being only human after all, the moral and mental fibre so requisite for their high calling may be broken down. We resent the charges of unworthy motives imputed to us in giving this relief from an injustice so long acknowledged by such eminent authorities to exist; but we should be weak indeed if we refused to do a plain act of justice for fear of slanderous tongues. The method to be chosen for this must have presented a difficult problem to the Government. Personally, I should have been very glad if any method could have been devised for re-modelling the present system of assessment so as to re-adjust the burthen more fairly among the different parties liable. But one has only to consider for a moment, to see the impossibility of granting any speedy relief upon such a basis as that. On the whole, I see no other way in which it could be so well done. Prejudice was appealed to: just now by one of the speakers, who said the share of the local taxation fund, which would go to the relief of this inequality, would be money contributed

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by persons of various creeds other than that of the clergy of the Church of England. Yes, but the persons whose rates have been less on account of the over-assessment of the clergy have also been persons of different persuasions. They are not now asked to refund any of the monies which the Royal Commission finds that the clergy have been paying for them, but the rate-collector is requested to take less in future from the clergy in respect of tithe. The balance is to be provided out of funds which were on their way to the local authorities in relief of rates already. But inasmuch as the local taxation account has increased beyond all expectation the sum diverted for this purpose will be hardly a perceptible reduction compared with recent receipts of local authorities on local taxation account. Moreover, the Act is only temporary, for a couple of years or so, and will not prevent the Royal Commissioners on local taxation from reporting fully upon the incidence of local burthens when they make their final report. I congratulate the Government upon the skill with which they have performed a difficult, but most necessary duty towards a body of men who are prevented by their calling from looking after their own worldly interests so keenly as laymen can do, and who have, in this matter of rating, been pressed to the wall. I shall never give a vote with more satisfaction than in support of the Second Reading of this Bill.

Mr. STUART (Shoreditch): I cannot admit the attitude taken up by hon. Gentlemen that our opposition to this Bill involves any attack on the Church of England. It is those who bring in this Bill who are attacking the Church of England. Almost the whole of the arguments on the Government side of the House have been based on the fallacy that the incumbent has the right to the gross amount of the commutation of the tithe, or of the rent-charge to which it has been commuted. I deny that position, and hold that what the clergyman has a right to under the existing law is the tithe diminished by the rates upon it. Let that position be answered. The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down has spoken as though there had been some legal right; and another hon. Gentleman—I think the hon. Member for Woodbridge—said that the legal position taken towards

the clergy brought about the extreme amount of rates they had to pay. Whatever may be my views on that point, that is the legal position, which has been maintained for 300 years, and if this is to be altered it must be altered by legislation. Now, what is the justice of the case? I listened with great interest to the speech of the hon. Member for Stroud, and I sat with him on the Royal Commission day after day and month after month, and I am aware what his position is. His position does not go to the support of this Bill—that is shown by the Memorandum he signed in the Commission, which shows not that the rating of tithes is unjust or unfair, but that the assessment of taxes is unjust and unfair. Those are very different things. If you alter the assessment of tithes, the result is that you throw on the other ratepayers of the district all that you save the tithe-owners. If you alter the rating, that is a thing which requires legislation and distinct instruction from this House. The net result of the proposal of the hon. Member for Stroud is that the clergy are entitled to the net amount of the tithes and that the assessments should be altered; but how would the hon. Gentleman meet his local ratepayers if they had to bear the burden? The members of the Royal Commission who favoured his proposal found themselves in this dilemma—that if they altered the assessment they would throw the burden on the local ratepayers. If they altered the amount of the rate imposed on these people, there was no evidence to show that the clergy have a right to be relieved out of the parochial rates. Now why has this been done? There has been throughout all the speeches made on the Government side of the House a repudiation of the Bill being based on the poverty of the clergy.

CAPTAIN PRETYMAN: That we repudiate.

MR. STUART: I accept all the repudiation and will assume that it is based on the principle that it is just and proper and necessary that there should be some alteration in the rates, but, unfortunately, that is not the case put by the clergy themselves. How can the Government repudiate it or say anything else than that something must be done to relieve the poverty of the clergy? The Member

for Stroud put the issue very clearly. He said the clergy paid too much rates on their tithes, and the rates ought to be reduced. That is the real issue, the poverty of the clergy. It may be right or wrong to relieve that poverty, but there is no doubt in my mind that this Bill is for that purpose. It has been said that the injustice has been growing. I do not know what is meant by that, but I have looked with great care through the Returns that have been made, and I find that no less than one-sixth of the whole number of cases were dealt with under the Commutation Act, all over England, and the amount commuted for rates was 3s. 6d. in the £ on the amount of rates commuted, and I find that the amount of rate per £ which the clergy has to pay is not only not increasing, but is diminishing. Instead of the injustice growing, the proportion of the gross income of the clergy generally throughout England that goes for rates is a decreasing proportion, whereas in big towns the proportion of the income of an ordinary man that goes for rates is increasing. Let me say a word with regard to the relative positions of the Church of England and the Dissenting bodies in this matter. If I wanted to improve the position of the Church of England I would not add *pro rata* to the incomes of the clergy, as this Bill does, but I would endeavour to level up the insufficient incomes. The scandal of the Church of England is not that a man who got £1,000 a year some years ago now only gets £750, but that the man who got £100 or £200 now only gets about two-thirds of that sum. The Nonconformists aim at levelling up the incomes, and only the other day one of the very poorest Dissenting communities, the Primitive Methodists, passed a resolution, which they will carry out, that they would raise the incomes of their ministers to at least £100 a year. Why do not the clergy of the Church of England appeal to the laity of the Church of England to raise the smaller incomes to a proper level?

AN HON. MEMBER: They do.

MR. STUART: Then why is not the response given? What we have to contend with in respect of the Church of England, and are trying to deal with in this Bill, is not any raising of rates or

any undue effect of the rates upon these persons, but the fall in the source of their income. That is the origin of this Bill. You say that the evil is due to the unequal way in which rates are charged to the benefited owners of tithes. That is an inequality which has existed for 300 years, and certainly and distinctly since the tithe commutation. It has been established and upheld repeatedly, and every clergyman has accepted his income subject to that understanding. Let us trace home that inequality of rating. What Sir George Cornewall Lewis brought forward as the real difficulty was not the over assessment of the clergy, but the under assessment of other people. If that be so, the Government should have taken into consideration not one of the interim Reports of the Royal Commission, but both of them. The Report upon which this Bill is based is the second interim Report. The first was issued with the object of obtaining an adequate and equal assessment of all property, and was absolutely unanimous. Why was not that acted upon? It worked out a complete scheme whereby the thing could be dealt with—very different from the hazy manner in which this tithe question was treated. If that Report had been taken, it would have corrected a large amount of these evils, and also a great many other evils at the same time. It will not do to speak of the clergy as if they were the only case of over assessment. There are innumerable other cases, such as the owners of machinery, and the London ratepayer, who took his house many years ago and has to submit to large taxation for improvements which will be exhausted before his lease is out. The hardship in the cases I have cited is an individual hardship, while that of the clergy is a corporate hardship pertaining to the Church as a corporate body. The individual clergyman has accepted his salary subject to these conditions, so that the claim of the Church of England is a corporate claim to be exempted from the operation of rates upon the tithe. The pathetic speech of the hon. Member for Stockport, which will ring in the ears and minds of many Members of this House for a very long time, expresses the feeling which is very widely spread amongst the Liberals and Conservatives, persons of all grades and character of opinion throughout the country. It is undoubted that there are doles given to

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certain specified favoured classes by the present Government, and in principle, though not in amount, this present dole is the most objectionable the House has given. It is an endowment of the Church of England by the State. It is raising a religious warfare which was slumbering; it adopts a method which is absolutely iniquitous as between the various persons to whom the grant is distributed. The man with an income of £100, paying about £20 in rates, so that his proper income is £80, is to get £10, while the man with £1,000 a year is to get £100. As in the case of the Agricultural Rating Act, you are giving it at the wrong end. I was a member of the Royal Commission, and have sat through the whole of their inquiry. What was the origin of that Commission? It originated from the Agricultural Rating Act. What was the object of the Commission? It was to see whether, the Agricultural Rating Act having passed the House, we could take the necessary steps to relieve the general body of ratepayers. It is an extraordinary step that, having appointed the Commission, the Government should proceed to deal, not with the case of the ordinary ratepayer, but with that of one particular and selected class. The method of Royal Commissions is becoming little less than a scandal. We get Royal Commissions which investigate for years, which report after great consideration, and whose Reports are worthy of consideration, but nothing more is ever heard of them. We get other Commissions, which are practically invited by the Government which has proposed them to make special Reports upon special points, with a view to the Government dealing with those particular points. Such a state of things is not creditable to the House. I venture to express the view that this Bill will be very unacceptable, not only to Members on this side of the House, but also to Members on the other side, and it is a piece of legislation which is wholly retrograde, because one of the very things the Royal Commission had to consider was the question of the propriety of grants in aid.

MR. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN (Kent, Tunbridge): The hon. Member who has just sat down, instead of dealing with this Bill, has spent the whole of his time in denouncing the system of what he

calls "doles" in the case of a Bill which is not a dole at all. He has raked up religious controversies, and devoted his arguments, not to the Bill, but to trying to demolish a certain circular issued by a certain clergyman, who does not represent in the least those who are to be relieved by this Bill. This is a subject I have considered very carefully, having been invited by certain colleagues of mine in this House to give evidence before the Royal Commission, where I had the opportunity of giving the conclusions I had drawn from a large amount of evidence which I had collected from many sources. The question is really a very simple one. It is not a question of rating, but merely one of assessment, the whole point being that the parson is assessed at a higher rate than anybody else. The hon. Member contended that, because it is a question of assessment, therefore instead of supplying the deficiency which would be caused by lowering the assessment you ought to throw the burden upon the other ratepayers. That is precisely what this Bill does, because the money comes out of the Local Taxation Account, which the Imperial taxpayer has to pay in any case. It is only a question of how the Local Taxation Account is to be applied, and if a certain amount is to be applied in making good the deficiency which is caused by the clergyman paying only half his rates, in the future it follows that there is less for other local purposes to which the fund would otherwise be applied. Then, Sir, the tithe-owner is assessed on a higher basis than other ratepayers; he pays upon his whole receipts, whereas, to take this case, an occupier of an agricultural farm does not pay on the whole produce of his soil; he pays on that portion which he hands over to his landlord in the shape of rent, after he has first of all deducted the cost of production and his own tenants' profits. That is the difference between the way in which the clergy and other ratepayers are assessed. So far from this Bill giving a dole to the clergy, it is merely a very tardy act of justice which ought to have been done years ago. I cannot imagine a more senseless proceeding than for the friends of the Church to ask for a dole of this kind. It would be the most senseless and foolish proceeding we could possibly indulge in. The dole is so small that, apart from the point of view of meting out

justice to the clergy, it is really almost a pity to take it.

SEVERAL OPPOSITION MEMBERS :
Hear, hear.

MR. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN : Yes, as a dole. But as an act of justice it ought to have been done years ago. You say we are indulging in class legislation. Nothing of the kind. You are merely doing justice to the clergy just as you ought to do to any other class of the community. So far from our being subject to any class prejudice, and asking for special favour for those whom we support, it is hon. Members opposite who have a sort of animosity against clergymen, and would deny them the barest act of justice. I said that the question is one of assessment, and that the parson is assessed too high. But there is a further grievance which ought to be dealt with, and which is only partly dealt with by this Bill. Not only is the parson assessed upon too high a basis, but he is not allowed the deductions from his assessments which are absolutely necessary. The Parochial Assessment Act of 1836 laid down certain deductions which had to be made in order to arrive at the rateable value. Parliament then consisted of persons who were principally landlords. I say nothing against that, but they understood only the deductions which were applicable to land, and they put in the Bill that certain things such as repairs, insurance, and other things should be deducted in order to find out the rateable value. These were put in as applicable to land and buildings, but they were not made applicable to tithe rent-charge, and those things cannot be deducted in arriving at the rateable value. In places where the tithe-owner is legally bound to keep a curate, or make a payment to a district church, he is not, even in such a case, allowed to make any deductions. Therefore, not only is he paying on too high a basis, but he is also paying, in a great many instances, on a large amount of money which does not come into his pocket at all, and that constitutes a grievance which it is high time the House ought to remove. I appeared before the Royal Commission upon this question, and I was able to collect a great many instances in which clergymen suffer at present. Here is the case of the parish of Hailsham, in Sussex. The tithe charge is £423, and the income from other sources £66 19s., which makes the total

value of the living £490. The parson has to pay out of that £300 a year to curates, who are absolutely necessary, and yet he has to pay rates upon practically the whole of his tithe rent-charge, amounting to some £87 a year. He pays for other outgoings £39, and his net income instead of being £490 is only £63 17s. 9d. I ask is it fair that a clergyman should pay rates upon £300 a year, which does not go into his pocket at all. In another case at Buresdon (Hampshire), the tithe produces £74 a year, and the revenue from other sources of £63 brings the living to £137; the parson pays £130 for a curate, and he pays rates upon the whole tithe rent-charge to the amount of £10 a year, and other necessary outgoings £6. Therefore his income is £137 and his outgoings are £145, and this man is actually out of pocket as the result of his work, but still he has to contribute £10 a year to the rates. I will give just one other instance of the unfairness where a man is paying rates on what he does not receive. At Lindsell, in Essex, there was a case where the tithe rent-charge was £142, and the income from other sources £5 15s. The rates paid by the clergyman amount to £39, and for other necessary outgoings he pays £7, making the total outgoings £46. Therefore the rates on the income amount to about one-fourth of the gross total, and between one-half and one-third of the net total. There are a good many more similar instances, but I will not weary the House with them. I venture to say that the clergy are, without exception, the most severely rated people in the country. That is the case which we have to present in favour of the Bill. I deny altogether that this is a got-up agitation. Let me come now to the question of the Royal Commission which sat upon this question. It contained the names of many men of eminence on both sides of politics. It contained men like Sir John Hibbert and Sir George Murray, who could not be considered as advocates of any narrow, bigoted ecclesiastical policy. There was also the hon. Member for East Donegal, who made a separate Report, advocating something rather different to what the Royal Commission recommended, although he agreed that a grievance had been fully made out. He said in the minority Report:

"I am, therefore, of opinion that the case of hardship which has been admittedly made out
Mr. Griffith-Boscawen.

would be naturally, sufficiently, and prudently met by the extension to the tithe rent-charge of the provisions of the Agricultural Rates Act, 1896."

The hon. Member for East Donegal is not a member of the Church party, and he speaks from a purely independent point of view, and even he admits the grievance as fully as anybody else. I will now take a Member of the rank and file of the Party opposite, the hon. Member for Mid. Norfolk. There was an election in South Norfolk a year ago, and it did not result altogether satisfactorily to the Party to which I belong, and I suppose this question had something to do with that result. Now the hon. Member for Mid. Norfolk, in support of the hon. Member for South Norfolk, issued the following circular:

"When the Agricultural Rating Relief Bill came before Parliament I put an Amendment on the Paper, the object of which was to include the clergy in the relief granted to other people whose incomes were affected by the fall in the price of corn. When this Amendment was nearly reached it was closed out by the Government, and all discussion of it thereby prevented. Since then, though a Liberal, I have voted for a Resolution in favour of the relief of the clergy from the rating of their entire income, but again the Government stepped in and defeated the proposal. I am glad to say Mr. Soames has promised, if returned, to join with me in endeavouring to enforce this measure of obvious justice."

I shall be glad to hear what the hon. Members for Norfolk intend to do with regard to this measure. I contend that this grievance has been fully made out; it has existed for a good many years, and ought to be dealt with by the Government. It is true that when the clergy accepted their livings they knew that they would have to pay these taxes, but for the last sixty years they have protested against them. The condition of clergyman has been made worse and worse for a great many years, for under the Statute of Elizabeth he was not rated at all as an occupier, but as an inhabitant to pay according to his ability. The Statute is one of the year 1601, and by it the overseers are enabled:

"To raise weekly or otherwise by taxation of every parson, vicar, and other, and of every occupier of lands, houses, tithes, impropriates or appropriations of tithes, coal mines or saleable underwoods in the said parish in such competent sum or sums of money as they shall think fit."

The Government by their present proposal are merely reverting to the original

plan. Up to the time of the Parochial Assessments Act of 1836 the clergyman did not pay on the whole amount of his tithe, but only on a certain proportion; but when the Act was passed he was rated on the full amount. The parson's case is a very hard one, which has been made harder by contrary decisions of the Courts, and this measure is only a very tardy act of justice. I am surprised, knowing the intelligence of hon. Members opposite, that they should make so much of this absolute mare's nest. I apologise to the House for having occupied the time at such length, but I do feel that this is a matter upon which we ought, to the best of our ability, to do this act of justice. We do not ask for assistance to help the struggling clergy, but whether they be rich or poor they have a claim to be rated fairly.

MR. ALFRED THOMAS (Glamorgan-shire, E.): The hon. Member who last addressed the House has quoted several cases of hardship. There is, however, one prominent characteristic of the Conservative Party, and it is that when they are in office they never forget their friends. In this respect I do not think that even the author of the phrase "to the victors belong the spoil" could give them any points. This characteristic has never before been developed to such an extent as it has been during the present Administration, for it has now become an epidemic. We have had some eloquent speeches with regard to the injustice of granting bounties which allow foreign manufacturers to enter into competition with us under unfair conditions, but why do they want to follow the example in this case? What is the justification for this measure? The right hon. Gentleman did not say that it was brought in because of the poverty of the clergy, but because they were overrated. If these clergymen are underpaid, who ought to pay them their proper stipends? Is it not the community to which they belong who ought to pay them? When we find that our Nonconformist ministers are underpaid we subscribe for them, but immediately these clergymen find themselves in difficulties they come to Parliament and dip their hands into the public purse of this country. But even these underpaid clergymen will not be benefited by this Bill. The President of the Board of Agriculture said, and we agree with

him, that a number of the clergy of the Church of England are underpaid. But whose fault is that? Surely those to whom they minister. It is unjust to ask those outside of the Establishment to make up for the deficiencies caused by a want of appreciation of the obligations of the members of that community. The members of the Church of England are, in a word, the wealthy classes of the country, but when it is necessary to meet any difficulty, such as that now before the House, their only remedy is to dip their hands into the public purse. The clergy who are the most deserving of consideration—namely, those who labour in the large towns—will not receive any advantage from the present measure. The worst enemy of the Party opposite could not have devised a more damaging measure for their reputation. If it does not fill up the cup I shall be much mistaken, for I cannot conceive any piece of legislation more calculated to rouse the indignation of Dissenters than this attempt to further endow the Church of England. It seems that no fund is sacred in the eyes of hon. Gentlemen opposite—not even the Sinking Fund. I am very sorry for the President of the Board of Agriculture that it should fall to his lot to bring in so unhappy a measure.

***LORD E. FITZMAURICE** (Wiltshire, Cricklade): My right hon. friend the Member for East Fife, who commenced the Debate this evening, complained of the difficult position in which the House had been placed by the conduct of Her Majesty's Government in regard to the way in which the various stages of the Bill had been taken. He pointed out that the rules of the House had been abused to bring in this Bill in a hurried fashion, and that, notwithstanding that fact, a very brief interval had been allowed to elapse between the introduction of the Bill and its Second Reading. But not only has this House a right to complain in regard to the manner in which the Bill has been hurried here, but we also have a right to complain on behalf of the county and local authorities of the country, that they have not had sufficient time given them to consider a Bill which affects every one of them in a vital manner, and as to which they might fairly have been given some opportunity of expressing an opinion. My right hon. friend, in introducing this Bill, used an expression that

there was a "balance" at his disposal, and no doubt that assertion left the impression on the minds of many hon. Members who heard it that there was some unappropriated balance lodged somewhere which was or was not, according as the Government might determine, at the disposal of the local authority. Now the whole of the Local Taxation Fund, out of which this £87,000 is to be paid, is at this moment, by Statute, the property of the county and local authorities, and the only duty of the Government is to distribute it amongst them. I think, however, it is now clearly understood that all this machinery of recouping a parochial account out of another account—namely, the county account—is simply an elaborate process of robbing Peter to pay Paul, and it was correctly described by the happy phrase which I heard fall from my hon. friend the Member for King's Lynn at question time when he said:

"It is nothing but an interception of an interception."

The Local Taxation Fund is itself an interception from the Exchequer of moneys on their way there, and the proposal to intercept money before it is paid over by the Surveyor of Taxes to the Local Taxation Fund is a new and very objectionable departure in finance. I can only express astonishment that a purist Finance Minister should have ever consented to such a condition of affairs being introduced. Having said so much on that aspect of the question, I would ask the permission of the House to say a few words upon some of the points which have been raised in the course of this long and intricate Debate. What struck me in connection with the speeches of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite was that they all varied their defence of the Bill. Hardly two of them adopted the same course of argument, and what I would suggest is, whether they could not make up their minds to justify this attack upon the ratepayers and taxpayers of the country either upon eleemosynary grounds—though that was repudiated by the President of the Board of Agriculture; or on the ground that the clergyman is the only person who is rated upon his full income and not on his holding. It is said that the Bill is justified by the interim Report of the Royal Commission, just as the first Report of the Royal Commission was said to justify the Agricultural Rating Bill of

1896. I think, however, the Government will find some difficulty in justifying this particular Bill by the recommendations of the Royal Commission. It is, indeed, true that in their opinion the alleged grievances of the owner of tithe rent-charge should be met by some special measure of relief, but what that measure of relief should be they prudently abstained from saying. The Royal Commission sums up the case for a change by saying that the burden of local taxation on such owners is unduly onerous, and it is suggested that sufficient allowance is not made for the fact that persons entitled to the tithe rent-charge are under legal obligation to render services and perform duties in return for it. In an earlier part of the Report they suggest that certain deductions should be made from the gross rent-charge before the annual rateable value is arrived at, though they nowhere expressly recommend it. But that is not the proposal of the Bill, though it is an old idea on the part of the Conservative Party. In all the Bills which were brought into this House by Mr. Slater-Booth, and which were successfully resisted on this side of the House, the gross value of tithe rent-charge was to be entitled to the deductions of the salaries of curates whose appointment had been approved by the Bishop of the Diocese, and the value of the tithe rent-charge was only to be arrived at after these deductions had been made. If the Government had proposed that, they would at least have been able to say that they were treading in the footsteps of their predecessors and carrying out the recommendations of the Royal Commission. But that is an absolutely different proposal from what is to be found in the Bill. Then we come to the next recommendation of the Royal Commission. It practically comes to this, that the owners of tithe rent-charge are in a very much less favourable position than the other occupiers of rateable property, and the Commission points to the assessment of other classes of property in a more fair and legitimate manner, so that it will not be in the power of Boards of Guardians to put up the rates on tithe rent-charge to an exceedingly high point, in order to reduce the others in a proportionate degree. I am bound to say, from my own experience, boards of guardians have, under the influences I have described, often laid their heads together to force on the un-

fortunate clergyman the very maximum of the rating burden of the parish. But it is a very different thing to remedy that evil where it exists, and to give the clergyman the right to take one-half of their rates out of the local taxation account, which is what the Bill proposes. The Royal Commission also pointed out that there is an acute feeling of dissatisfaction in regard to the manner of arriving at rateable value in the case of tithe. We all know that the average ratepayer always thinks that his rates are going up, and that deductions are too small from gross value; but that is no justification for bringing forward new and untried legislation. We have had arguments of a recondite nature brought forward by the hon. Member for the Stroud Division and the hon. Member for one of the Divisions of Berkshire. The legal argument of the hon. and learned Member for Stroud begs the whole question, because he attempts to go behind the legislation of 1836. The hon. and learned Member mentioned the case of "*The King v. Jodrell*," but I think the House has some right to complain of the manner in which he introduced that case, because nobody knows better than the hon. and learned Gentleman that that case had a sequel, and he passed over that sequel—"The Queen *v. Capel*"—very lightly, though it left very little of the former case standing. The case of the "*King v. Jodrell*" was decided before the Commutation Act of 1836, and therefore it cannot be cited in the interpretation of that Act. It is remarkable that the Report of the Royal Commission disposes of the decision in the case of the "*Queen v. Capel*," and that that Report is signed by, amongst others, the hon. and learned Member himself. In connection with this point I may remind the House that the President of the Board of Agriculture, in an early part of his speech, went out of his way to give a warning about some little pitfall that we on this side of the House were likely to fall into. I know that there was a very general expectation, for it was conveyed to me from more than one quarter, that we were the victims of a horrible delusion. All the Liberal newspapers that morning, it was declared, had published articles showing the grossest ignorance of this question, and we had all come down primed with these gross blunders, and were about to bestow them upon the House. I think it was a great dis-

appointment to hon. Gentlemen opposite to find that instead of falling into this alleged pitfall, my right hon. friend the Member for East Fife made a very clear and unanswerable statement as to what happened in 1836 in regard to the addition of a sum to the rates. Hon. Gentlemen opposite have not replied to that clear statement, but have gone out of their way to reply to supposed inaccurate arguments in the daily papers. In the course of the Debate I have looked at two of these journals. You do not expect in newspapers the use of strict, legal, technical words like the judgment of the High Court; but, taking words in their ordinary meaning, I am unable to see in the statements published anything that can be called a substantial inaccuracy. The statement amounted to this, that in those cases where, before 1836, a composition existed, under which the tithe-owner was relieved from all rates, the Commission were directed to make so much addition to the annual value as would represent the rates which in future were to be paid by the clergyman, thus replacing what had been paid. That is so, is it not? The hon. Members for Stroud and Berkshire went out of their way to say that the tithe-owner was the only person who was rated upon the gross value. The tithe-owner is not rated on the gross value; he is rated, like everybody else, on the net value. But what is perfectly true is that there are some deductions which apply to other properties which have no existence in regard to tithe. Instead of having to fight with a number of tenants for so many sheaves of corn, or wheat, or barley, the clergyman, since the Act of 1836, is allowed to receive a money commutation free from all this anxiety. If you take one side of the account, you must in common justice take the other also. We should not have regard to all the disadvantages of the clergyman, and entirely disregard the advantages he has. By more recent legislation also his remedies at law have been still further improved. Therefore I venture to say that, when you come to examine the position of the tithe-owner in the matter of income, you may fairly say that although it is perfectly true that he is rated more nearly to his gross receipts than many other persons, it is only because these gross receipts are, in his case, more nearly the whole of the real income he receives

than they are in the case of the ordinary owner of a hereditament, who is entitled to make deductions which the owner of tithe is not entitled to make simply because he is not under the disadvantages which justify the deductions. I think these points are worthy of the consideration of the House; but there are other larger and broader considerations connected with this Bill. We are told we are not justified in charging the President of the Board of Agriculture with having dealt with this question on an eleemosynary basis; but I venture to ask, if we are not dealing with this question on an eleemosynary basis, on what basis are we dealing with it? I have shown that if you depart from the eleemosynary basis, all the arguments on the other side are inconsistent. If this Bill is not eleemosynary, why do you not extend your favours to the lay impropriators? As a matter of fact, this Bill has grown out of the difficulties which have arisen in connection with the Agricultural Rating Act. A year ago I had experience of a contested election, and can say that one clergyman after another came to me and asked me why it was that the owners of the tithe rent-charge had been omitted from the Agricultural Rating Act, and they expatiated upon the gross injustice of their omission. And at every single meeting during the contest extreme pressure was brought to bear on the candidates, and complaints were made that the poor tithe rent-charge owners did not receive the same advantages as the wealthy holders and owners of land. The fact is, that this is a measure for the relief of the clergy; and is it not something of a public scandal that this demand should be brought forward on behalf of a Church which contains within its ranks nearly all the wealth and social prestige of this country? If you are told in the country districts, as sometimes you are, that there is an unfortunate clergyman who is suffering from agricultural depression, and that the value of the tithe rent-charge has fallen and the rates have gone on increasing, is it not something of a scandal, when you look round, that there is no man of position and rank in the neighbourhood who belongs to the Church of England to provide a remedy. Would it not be better if the Church of England were to spend less of its vast revenues on church restoration, and a little more to increase the incomes of the suffering clergy—for I am

Lord E. Fitzmaurice.

the first person to admit that the clergy do suffer, and that they often endure hardships in the country districts sometimes of a most heartrending description. This Bill will do nothing to relieve these clergy. I would ask whether the Archbishops and Bishops could not give up their war against Dissent, and withdraw some of the funds now devoted to the desperate and failing fight to keep out school boards and to prevent the establishment of school boards, and to maintain the waning life of the voluntary system, in order to devote them to the assistance of the suffering clergy. Would that not be a far nobler task than to come to Parliament and ask that Parliament should devote out of the funds contributed by all creeds and parties a sum of nearly £100,000 to relieve the necessities of the clergy of the greatest and wealthiest religious body in Europe?

LORD EDWARD MANNERS (Leicestershire, Melton): I make no claim to any extraordinary knowledge on the subject, but I trust the House will excuse me if I follow the noble Lord, with whom, unfortunately, I do not find myself in agreement. I wish to seize the present opportunity of thanking Her Majesty's Government for having brought in this Bill for the relief of the clergy. I would only say that we have given hon. Members opposite a handle whereby they can make it extremely unpleasant for us; but it would have been very much more to our advantage if the tithe-owning clergy had been included in the Agricultural Rating Act. I can only suppose that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was unable at the time to put his hand deep enough into his pocket to provide the necessary funds. But I can assure hon. Gentleman opposite that we are prepared to face our constituencies on this Bill and to accept the responsibility. I was surprised to hear the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition say that because this injustice had gone on since the time of Queen Elizabeth it should go on for ever.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I did not say that. It was the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and I was merely quoting from the right hon. Gentleman.

LORD EDWARD MANNERS: Even if the wrong has gone on from time im-

memorial I do not see why it should not be now redressed. My only regret is that the Bill is not retrospective in its action, and that the clergy are not to be put on the same footing as they would have been if they had been included in the Agricultural Rating Act. What was the programme of the Gentlemen opposite in 1895, compared with this legislation? The only difference is that their legislation was not for the benefit of their fellow-countrymen, but for their destruction. The ordinary Englishman, according to the old story, gets up in the morning, and, looking out, said "It's going to be fine to-day; let us go and kill something." The ordinary Radical gets up in the morning—he does not even look to see whether it is going to be a fine day, but says "Let us go and destroy some English institution." I was surprised to hear some reference to the Scotch Church; but that has absolutely nothing to do with the justice of the proposals of the Bill. I know many cases in which the landlord of a large estate who happens to be the patron of a living has, with the assistance of ecclesiastical societies, raised the income of the rural incumbent to the minimum amount; and I have no doubt that many cases of the same kind are within the cognizance of hon. Members. I only wish to say, in conclusion, that I was surprised to hear that the Church of England was supposed to be the richest Church of any denomination in this country. I have not inquired into the relative funds available to the various Churches, but I have always been given to understand that the Wesleyans were extremely well endowed. It was only a few months ago that a whip was sent round to raise a sum of a million. The next religious body to be attacked will be the Wesleyans. Whatever opposition or obstruction may be offered to this Bill, I trust the Government will go on with it and pass it into law this session.

*MR. HALDANE (Haddingtonshire): The noble Lord who has just sat down began his speech by saying that although the Bill would expose the Government to much odium, still it was founded on an act of justice, and he trusted that the Government will hold to it and pass it. I can assure the noble Lord that if many of us who sit on this side of the House

thought that the Bill was founded on an act of justice, we would refrain from giving it our uncompromising opposition, and would support it. But it is because we entertain very different notions as to those considerations of justice that we differ profoundly from the conclusions at which he has arrived. Now, I do not mean to traverse the whole field, or anything like it, of the Debate. But there have been two speeches made to-night—one by the hon. Member for Stroud and the other by the hon. Member for one of the divisions of Kent, which have thrown down distinctly a challenge upon what they alleged was the real question at the root of the Bill. They disclaim altogether any idea of asking Parliament to come to the relief of the clergy; or that this Bill is founded on any idea of charity. They allege that they are prepared to have the Bill tested and tried by the question whether the present mode of assessing the tithe rent-charge is a just mode or not; and they go on to say that in no other case are rates charged on gross revenue and that there is no analogy to the mode of assessing any subjects comparable to the case of the tithe rent-charge. Now, I join issue altogether with the right hon. Members opposite. The hon. Member for Stroud began by saying that the Members for East Fife and West Fife had both walked round the Bill instead of coming to close quarters with it, and that they had not touched the real point, which is whether the tithe rent-charge was justly rated or not; and then he went on to what he said was his version of the true state of the argument. The hon. Member asked what were the deductions which ought to be made from the rent-charge before it could be said to be assessable on a proper footing.

MR. CRIPPS: I refer the hon. and learned Member to the Report of the Royal Commission which was signed by Sir John Hibbert and others.

*MR. HALDANE: I have referred to the Report and have found some deductions which the hon. and learned Member did not give us. First of all it appears that the deductions were to include the expense of collecting the charge; then a deduction in respect of the profit of the

tenant, where a proper case can be made out; and further the usual deductions of rates and taxes—which have been always allowed. Then the hon. Member for Kent puts forward a claim of deductions of the wages or stipend to be paid to the parson or vicar, the payments to curates, the chargeability of the parson for repairs of the church, the payment of pensions to retired incumbents and the sums paid to the Governors of Queen Anne's Bounty in repayment of loans, etc. I think it can be shown that there is not one of these deductions which ought to be listened to for a moment. Suppose an ordinary owner of land, which he occupies himself, has inherited the land with a mortgage on it, is he entitled to go to the Assessment Committee and say, "Oh, here is this mortgage and I am entitled to deduct the amount of it in order to get at my true rateable value"? That is exactly what the owners of clerical tithe rent-charge say. I do not wonder that the Government did not face and specify these deductions; because if they had they would have run counter to what the Courts had ruled out as totally inadmissible. They content themselves with taking the whole thing in a lump and say "we will pay half the rates of the owners of the tithe rent-charge." Hon. Members opposite complain of the hardship on the clergy because they have to render services in respect of the income they receive, while in many cases they have to make payments to others. The whole law on which this matter rests was explained by the House of Lords thirty or forty years ago in the Mersey Dock case. The Commissioners of the Mersey Docks received an income from the docks and under their Acts of Parliament they were bound to apply the dues they received to various public purposes; and they said:

"Is it not monstrous that we should be rated in respect of income which we are bound to pay away at once—as soon as we get it?"

They had a far stronger case than the clergy; but what did the House of Lords lay down as the interpretation of the Statute? They said:

"What you have got to look at is the income that is received from the property, and the rates are levied on that income, and therefore you cannot go into considerations of how people are bound to spend that income, any more than you can take into account the money paid to a mortgagee."

Mr. Haldane.

I challenge the hon. and learned Gentleman to say that that was not the effect of the decision of the House of Lords.

MR. CRIPPS: I am bound to say that I do not agree with the hon. and learned Gentleman.

***MR. HALDANE:** I maintain that what the House of Lords laid down distinctly was that what had to be taken into consideration was the income, and that how that income was disposed of was wholly irrelevant. What you rate is not what the incumbent puts in his pocket, but the annual value of the property. Blackstone explains how the clergy came to be rated on the tithes they receive. Tithes consist of the greater and the lesser tithes; but he points out that both these kinds of tithes have this great feature in common—that they were given, not merely for the maintenance of the clergy, but for the relief of the poor; and as a consequence of that the Parliament which passed the statute of 1601 thought it just that the clergy should be rated to the poor rate. That, according to Blackstone, was how the clergy came to be liable for this rate. Right through the decisions of the Courts that theory has been maintained, and right down to a recent case, in 1886, when the full Court of Appeal considered the matter most deliberately, it has been held that it is not the income of the clergy—not a question of what he puts in his pocket as net income, but the total income of the tithe rent-charge which is the subject of rating. How can you take off pensions to retired incumbents, or payments to curates? Do you think it would be possible for the Courts to say that an absentee incumbent of a city church, who never goes near his church but pays a curate to do his work, was entitled to deduct that sum which he paid his curate? What was at the bottom of the Jodrell case was that for a long time before the Act of 1836 it was the custom to deduct the costs which had to be borne by the occupier of land before he earned the fruits; but in the case of the tithe rent-charge there is no exertion on the part of the incumbent to produce the fruits, and therefore the Courts ultimately drew the distinction between the tithe rent-charge, which required no

expenditure to produce the fruits, and the case where expenditure had to be incurred in order to produce the fruits of the farm. Again, I say the tithe rent-charge is not an outcome of the profit that goes into the pockets of the incumbent after spending certain money. It is the subject of property that has to be rated according to the ordinary principles of rating. The whole of the deductions put forward by the hon. Member for Kent, and recognised by the hon. Member for Stroud and his colleagues, must therefore be disallowed. If that be so, it seems to me that the case which the Government make out in support of this Bill, so far as it is based upon moral injustice—or indeed, for that matter, so far as it is based on some economic and legal injustice—not only rests upon a flimsy footing but upon no footing at all. It is contrary to sound business principles, to the decisions of the courts, and to the law of the land as it has existed for some time, and that we should be asked to assent to the Bill on the ground that it is an act of justice is nothing less than astounding. It may be that the clergy are suffering from very hard circumstances. I can well believe it. It may be that it is time to give them relief and assistance. That I can believe also. But what is to be done for them has been done by other churches themselves. It has been done by the churches of the country to which I belong. It has been done by other churches in England, and I would therefore ask that we should be informed how it is that the Government can come to this House and, without specifying these deductions, without justifying them, make a claim upon us that we should assent to a measure which seeks to devote the public moneys to the benefit of the clergy.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.): One thing which the hon. and learned Gentleman said deserves attention, and that was that he had every sympathy with the parsons, and that he is at one with the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition. But I do not think that the sympathy of the hon. and learned Gentleman or the sympathy of the right hon. Gentleman opposite is likely to do the unfortunate parsons very much good. As far as I am concerned, my mind, like that of my hon. friend the Member for Stockport, is a perfectly open one on this ques-

tion, and I approach the subject from the humble standpoint of a simple agricultural Member. I have no prejudices whatever in the matter, because, since the passing of the Rating Act, the clergy of the division which I have the honour to represent have almost unanimously told me that they have not the slightest intention of voting for me at the next general election. I have a shrewd suspicion, Mr. Speaker, that even before the Rating Act was placed on the Statute Book it would have been pretty much the same. As far as I am concerned, the Bill will most certainly politically do me considerably more harm than good, and I very much regret that the Government have not been able to accept the suggestion of my hon. friend the Member for Basingstoke, that they should deal with the whole question of the redemption of tithe. I do not think hon. Members know the miserable condition of the rural clergy in the Eastern counties. A man has to occupy what is called the position of a gentleman and bring up his family on a stipend which would not be looked at by a self-respecting artisan. When a man accepts a living worth £300 or £400 a year, and the land from which the tithe is derived goes derelict and out of cultivation, the incumbent has absolutely nothing to live upon. He might just as well put his money into one of Jabez Balfour's properties. But that is not my reason for rising. I have risen to support the Second Reading of this Bill not because I have any intention of being charitable out of the rates or of being charitable out of other people's pockets. My sole reason in supporting this Bill is because, in my humble opinion, it is a matter of justice. The parson is rated on his professional income, and is taxed on money which absolutely does not go into his pocket at all. It is unnecessary for me to labour these points, or to trouble the House with many words upon this question; but before I sit down I should like to express my respectful surprise that the Government have chosen this psychological moment for bringing in this Bill. I, a humble occupant of the back benches, have ever believed in the consummate wisdom of the right hon. Gentlemen in front of me. We consider that it represents the combined wisdom of the serpent with the intelligence of the dove. Under these circumstances, and that being allowed, I cannot understand

why the Government have introduced this Bill at the present time.

*MR. MCKENNA (Monmouth, N.): The hon. and gallant Member who has just spoken, although he started in the discussion, as he told us, with a perfectly open mind, seems to have convinced himself during the debate in favour of the Bill. The only argument which he puts forward, and the only argument which has been put forward in defence of the measure, is that it is an act of justice to the clergy of this country because they are rated on the whole of their income, and in a way in which no other person is rated. That statement is neither true nor relevant. It is not true, because the clergy are by no means the only persons who are rated on the whole of their income or on the produce of the land, as the hon. Member for Stroud says. Let me remind the House of the system of rating which exists at the present moment with regard to collieries in this country. As the total output of the coal of the country is something like 200 million tons, it will be readily perceived that the amount of rates levied in respect of coal is very considerable, and consequently the analogy of the coal trade must be considered as important in this matter. The system of the rating of coal which exists in South Wales and Monmouthshire, and, I believe, in other parts of the country, is as follows:—Every ton of coal which is raised from the ground is valued for the purpose of rating at 8d. The actual profit made by the colliery owner on the average is not as much as 8d. but the average rateable value is assessed at 8d. It consequently appears that every colliery owner in this country is rated upon a total sum of money which on the average is in excess of his total profits. He is not rated according to his ability to pay; he is rated exactly as the clergyman is rated, upon the total value of his output. That is a system which applies to him exactly as to the clergy. But it is also true of the small shopkeeper. A shopkeeper is rated not only upon the rooms over his shop, but in respect of his business premises. I cite the case of the small shopkeeper, because it is notorious that he is very frequently rated on a sum fully equal to the whole of his profits. The small shopkeeper, making a net profit of £1 a week out of his shop, is frequently rated at an annual rental value of £50,

Major Rasch.

and every penny in the pound on that shopkeeper's rates is equivalent to a penny in income-tax. I think I have shown, without going into details—and I could give many more—that it is not true that the clergyman is the only person who is rated in respect of his income. Neither does that statement appear to be relevant to this particular argument. It has been admitted in the only argument which has been made in defence of this Bill that the tithe is properly rateable, and once that is admitted it cannot be relevant to the question of principle what the actual amount of the rate may be. Now, what is the case which has been made out by the Report of the Royal Commissioners? In all the cases which have been quoted in support of the view that there ought to be greater deductions from the tithe than are now made for the purpose of assessment, there is only one which favours the view of the Royal Commissioners, and that is the case of *The King versus Jodrell*. That case, as far as it goes, I grant, is in their favour, but there are dozens of other cases in which the question was decided in a different way. But I will assume, for the sake of argument, that the case put forward by the hon. Member for Stroud is correct, and that a proviso in the Parochial Assessment Act of 1836 was designed to give the tithe-owners a right of exemption which they do not now enjoy. If that is the case, if the right was taken away from them, owing to a technical construction of the proviso of the Act, what is the remedy? The remedy is not to pass this Bill, but to amend the proviso of the Parochial Assessment Act of 1836, putting the tithe-owners in exactly the same legal position as that in which you think they ought to have been in 1836. Let the question be decided by the Courts once more. I for one should be quite content to leave the issue to be so determined there. But have right hon. Gentlemen opposite realised what they are doing when they are going back over a period of 60 years, in order to reopen a question which has been settled? There are many of us on this side of the House who hold quite as strong opinions on the land question, but in a different sense, as hon. Gentlemen opposite. There are many of us who think that the 4s. in the £ land tax ought to be imposed on land in this country today exactly as it was imposed in 1692.

If we are again going to open a settled question in order that relief may be given to a certain class, we are just as much entitled to ask that relief shall be given to others also. It is said that we on this side of the House are afflicted with the predatory instincts of robbers. If that were true, I could claim that element of virtue which attached to the robberies of Robin Hood. We do not rob for ourselves or for our personal friends and connections. If we rob, it is for the benefit of the poor. I do not admit that we do rob, but if the version of hon. Gentlemen is correct, it is not for the advantage of our own pockets that we ask for certain amendments of the law. In the legislation proposed by hon. Gentlemen opposite, we find that when money is taken out of the pockets of the taxpayers for the benefit of any class it is invariably for the classes who are already well off—it is to gild affluence with luxury. If you reopen a settled question for the sake of the landlords and for the sake of the parsons, if you are content to go back to what you claim to be the primordial rights which existed in the time of Queen Elizabeth, we shall be entitled to do the same thing, and, I think, with far greater propriety, because our claim is for the poor. I shall vote against the Bill; but I shall remember that if this Bill be carried every Member in the future who thinks the same as I do on this question will feel authorised to respect no statute of limitations in reopening any question of taxation.

Debate arising.

Debate adjourned till Thursday.

TELEGRAPHS (TELEPHONIC COMMUNICATION, &c) BILL.

Order read, for resuming adjourned Debate on Amendment [26th June] to Motion for Committal to Standing Committee on Trade, &c. [21st June]:—

And which Amendment was—

“To leave out the words ‘the Standing Committee on Trade, &c.’ and to add the words ‘a Select Committee.’”—(*Mr. Cohen.*)

Question again proposed, “That the words ‘the Standing Committee on Trade, &c.’ stand part of the Question.”

MR. M^RIVER (Liverpool, Kirkdale): I think this question ought not to be pressed to-night. It has come on quite unexpectedly, and those who, like myself, represent Liverpool and constituencies which are not in favour of this Bill, are all taken by surprise. I find myself in the position of being called upon to express in a few words why I think this Bill should be referred to a Select Committee. Now, a Select Committee can hear evidence, and the evidence which will be produced if this Bill is sent—as it ought to be—to a Select Committee will, I think, go very largely to bear out the views which are those expressed not alone by the Chambers of Commerce, but—

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: We won't press it to-night.

Debate further adjourned till Tomorrow.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING (CLAUSES) BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1:—

MR. CALDWELL (Lanark, Mid.): I have an Amendment to move to Clause 1, page 1, line 7, to insert the words “and of every special Act passed.” I am sorry the President of the Board of Trade is not here to defend the Bill. I should

like to know why it is that the draftsman has altogether left out of view, in saying that the provisions contained in the Schedule to the Act shall be incorporated with every Provisional Order, the fact that these very powers may be granted by a Private Bill—

It being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

**BATHS AND WASH-HOUSES ACTS
AMENDMENT BILL.**

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 3 :—

Committee report Progress; to sit again on Thursday.

**METROPOLIS MANAGEMENT ACTS
AMENDMENT (BYE-LAWS) BILL
[Lords.]**

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 :—

Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

Adjourned at a quarter after
Twelve of the clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 28th June 1899.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

BRYNMAWR AND WESTERN VALLEYS
RAILWAY BILL.

Lords' Amendments considered, and
agreed to.

BURY CORPORATION BILL [Lords].
BURY CORPORATION WATER BILL
[Lords].

As amended, considered; to be read
the third time.

BROOKE'S PARK (LONDONDERRY)
BILL [Lords].

To be read a second time upon Thurs-
day, 6th July.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL
ORDERS (No. 17) BILL.

As amended, considered; to be read
the third time to-morrow.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL
ORDER (No. 15) BILL [RHYL ORDER].

Mr. Baldwin, Mr. McKenna, and Mr.
Tomlinson nominated members of the
Select Committee on Local Government
Provisional Order (No. 15) Bill [Rhyl
Order], with two members to be added by
the Committee of Selection.—(*Sir William
Walrand.*)

PETITIONS.

BOARD OF EDUCATION BILL.

Petition from Birmingham, for altera-
tion, to lie upon the Table.

PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE
(SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Newton Stewart, in
favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF FOOD AND DRUGS BILL.

Petition from Glasgow, for alteration;
to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON
SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Bradford,
and Grantham (two); to lie upon the
Table.

VOL. LXXIII. [FOURTH SERIES.]

VAGRANCY ACT, 1898.

Petition from Glasgow, for extension of
provisions to Scotland; to lie upon the
Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ARMY RIFLE RANGES.

Return [presented 26th June], to be
printed. [No 251.]

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION
(IRELAND).

Copy presented of Rules and Pro-
gramme of Examinations for 1900 [by
Act]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented of Diplomatic and
Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos.
2,296 to 2,301 [by Command]; to lie upon
the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (MISCELLANEOUS
SERIES).

Copy presented of Diplomatic and Con-
sular Reports, Miscellaneous Series, No.
506 [by Command]; to lie upon the
Table.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS AMENDMENT
BILL.

Special Report from the Select Com-
mittee on the Public Health Acts Amend-
ment Bill, with Minutes of Evidence,
brought up, and read.

PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS AMENDMENT
BILL.

Reported, without Amendment.

Report and Special Report to lie upon
the Table, and to be printed. [No. 252.]

TELEGRAPHS (TELEPHONIC COMMU-
NICATION, etc.) BILL.

Order read, for resuming adjourned
Debate on Amendment [June 26th] to
Question [June 21st]—"That the Bill be
committed to the Standing Committee on
Trade, etc." :—

And which Amendment was—

"To leave out the words 'the Standing Com-
mittee on Trade, etc.' and add the words 'a
Select Committee.'"—(*Mr. Cohen.*)

Question again proposed—"That the
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An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

words 'the Standing Committee on Trade, etc.,' stand part of the Question."

MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth) rose to speak.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member has already spoken.

MR. KIMBER: I began speaking at five minutes before 12 on Monday, and I think I am not debarred from finishing my speech.

*MR. SPEAKER: The Debate was resumed yesterday, and another hon. Member spoke.

MR. KIMBER: But I was informed by the responsible representatives of the front bench that the Debate would not be resumed last night and that I might go home.

*MR. SPEAKER: That does not affect the question of order.

MR. CAWLEY (Lancashire, Prestwich): How it can be contended that this Bill can be better dealt with by a Committee consisting partly of members of this House and partly of members of the House of Lords I cannot understand. The hon. Members who oppose this Bill going to the Grand Committee on Trade would never be satisfied unless they got a Committee which would decide exactly as they wish. The hon. Member for Islington contended that the action of the right hon. Gentlemen opposite was not in accordance with the findings of the Select Committee. That Committee was "strongly of opinion that general, immediate, and effective competition by the Post Office or local authorities is necessary," and "that a really efficient Post Office service affords the best means of securing such competition." That does not say at all that the competition should be by the Post Office; it only says the Post Office perhaps might be the best means. As I understand, if the Post Office take over the National Telephone Company they will have to take it over on certain conditions.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not addressing himself to the motion before the House.

MR. KIMBER: On a question of order. Not being present last night, I

cannot say from personal observation what took place, but I understand the Order was called on, and immediately, on a question being put by an hon. Member, adjourned.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is misinformed. An hon. Member spoke for two or three minutes, and the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the House turned round and said that if he persisted in his objection to the motion he would immediately adjourn it, and he moved the adjournment of the Debate, which was then agreed to.

MR. KIMBER: May I ask one more question? Is it competent for me now to move a further Amendment upon the Amendment which is now before the House?

*MR. SPEAKER: No; the question is that the words proposed to be left out stand part of the question.

MR. CAWLEY: The arguments which have been used in favour of sending this Bill to a Select Committee are that the previous Committee did not go into the question of municipal trading. I submit that a Committee investigating the telephone question could not go into the question of municipal trading. The whole matter has been investigated thoroughly, and I am decidedly in favour of it going to the Standing Committee on Trade.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): One reason why I object to the course which has been pursued by the Government is that we cannot enter into the merits of certain statements which were made by the Financial Secretary of the Treasury, and it is on account of those statements that some of us entertain an objection to this Bill going before a Grand Committee instead of being discussed in the House. The result of sending the Bill to a Select Committee at this period of the session, as is suggested, would be to shelve the whole thing. It is then proposed to send it to a Grand Committee. How have we arrived at that proposal? After the able speech of the Secretary of the Treasury on the Second Reading of the Bill, there undoubtedly was obstruction. The next day the First Lord of the Treasury tells us that under the circumstances he proposes to send the Bill to a

Grand Committee. What were the circumstances? When the Secretary of the Treasury made his speech there was no intention of sending the Bill to a Grand Committee.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): Yes.

MR. LABOUCHERE: And yet the Secretary of the Treasury asked us to pass the Second Reading, and did not, as is usual, tell us the Bill would be sent to a Grand Committee? The intention may have been adumbrated in the mind of the First Lord of the Treasury, but it did not assume living form until the next day, when the right hon. Gentleman announced that as a condition of the obstruction not being proceeded with the Bill should be sent to a Grand Committee. That was bargain number one. How was that bargain made?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HANBURY, Preston): I have thought from the first that sending it to a Grand Committee was the quickest way of getting it through.

MR. LABOUCHERE: If the necessary time had been given in the House, as we all anticipated, it would not have been necessary to send it to a Grand Committee. But if the First Lord of the Treasury had told the Secretary of the Treasury that he would not have time given to discuss it —

MR. HANBURY: That was not said.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Somehow or other the Secretary of the Treasury undoubtedly arrived at the conviction in his mind that it was very doubtful whether he would get time to discuss the Bill. He will admit that.

MR. HANBURY: No.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Well, I cannot look into the mind of the Secretary of the Treasury, but that is the result. Did the First Lord of the Treasury or the Secretary of the Treasury, between the time of moving the Second Reading and the making of the announcement with regard to the Bill going to a Grand Committee, see any

Members of the House who are also directors of this Company? They will not answer. Silence gives consent. The next step is that the Secretary of the Treasury gets up and says, "We now propose to send the Bill to a Grand Committee, and, what is more, I will tell you of certain concessions that have been made." To whom?

MR. HANBURY: To the Government.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Since these concessions were decided upon the opponents of the Bill have ceased their opposition, and yet the right hon. Gentleman wishes us to believe that the concessions have been made to the Government. The very fact that their opposition has flickered out proves that they think the concessions have been made to them. Those concessions are undoubtedly of a most important character, especially the one which will allow this company to exist after 1911. There was the strongest feeling in the House that no matter what happened we should retain absolutely all our rights to put an end to the concession at that time, and buy up their stock-in-trade at the price of old iron, if we happened to want any old iron then. The concession was not made to municipalities; they did not ask for it; they were perfectly satisfied with the Bill as it was. Another serious question in connection with the matter is that there has been an enormous amount of lobbying in regard to the Bill. It has been brought to the knowledge of the House that the banker of the company sent out a circular with a postal card, asking Members to state their views, either for or against the Bill. That was an attempt to influence Gentlemen to vote against the Bill.

***SIR JOHN LUBBOCK** (London University): Will the hon. Member quote the circular?

MR. LABOUCHERE: The right hon. Gentleman did not send me one of those circulars, because he knows that my public virtue is such that it would not be influenced in that way.

***SIR JOHN LUBBOCK:** The hon. Gentleman admits that he has not seen the circular, if he had I am sure he would feel his statement to be unfounded.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I did not get it, so far as I am aware, but it may have gone into the waste-paper basket, as I get a great deal of literature which goes there.

*MR. SPEAKER: This discussion is very foreign to the question before the House, which is whether the Bill should go to a Grand Committee or to a Select Committee.

MR. LABOUCHERE: This is my reason for sending it neither to a Grand Committee nor to a Select Committee: The chairman of this company stated plainly that gentlemen had been added to the Board who were Members of this House in order to obtain a considerable amount of Parliamentary influence. There is a very strong feeling in the country against Members of the House of Commons using their influence in this House on behalf of companies of which they are directors. The whole matter ought to be threshed out in Committee of the whole House, and not sent upstairs. All the more is this necessary as the Bill has been absolutely changed since its Second Reading. As to getting through in a brief time, the right hon. Gentleman the member for Wolverhampton answered that, when, a few evenings ago, alluding to a proposal to send a Bill before a Grand Committee, he said that at this time of the session the great difficulty is to get Members to attend on the Grand Committees, and always at this period of the session it is better to have a matter discussed in the House. I have no doubt that this Bill would be passed in one single night if we were given this opportunity. It is not a Party question, because a vast majority of Members both on this and the other side of the House are in favour of the Bill. This question concerns the dignity and honour of the House, more especially after these statements in regard to lobbying, and the statements about members of this Government being connected with the company. Those gentlemen have been instrumental in obtaining concessions from the country, and I think it concerns the honour of this House that the matter should not be sent upstairs, but that it should be threshed out in the House.

SIR J. JOICEY (Durham, Chester-le-Street): I must again disavow the insinuations which have been made by some Members of this House in regard to some

of us who are opposing this Bill. We are opposing this measure in the public interest, and I disavow entirely the insinuation that our action arises from any other reason. It is quite evident from what I have said in this House that I do not love this Bill at all, and I would welcome any means of delaying it in order that it may have fuller consideration by the country, because I recognise it is one of the most important questions which we have had before this House. I do not object to this Bill going to a Grand Committee, although I should prefer seeing it discussed in this House, or I would much rather that it went to a Select Committee. This Bill is not founded upon the Report which was given by the Select Committee last year, and I maintain my position with regard to that point whatever my hon. friends may say to the contrary. I say that this Bill is going in direct opposition to the strongest recommendations of that Committee. One of their strong recommendations was that assistance ought to be given by the Post Office. Now this Bill has been altered considerably. Other things have been introduced into the discussion which show that an arrangement has been come to with the National Telephone Company which goes even further against the recommendation of the Commission. It was never supposed for a moment that this licence would ever be extended beyond 1911, and if you send this Bill to the Committee you will be able to take evidence upon this point and go fully into the arrangement which has been entered into between the right hon. Gentleman and the representative of the National Telephone Company. I have strong objections to this Bill altogether, and I shall do everything in my power to delay this legislation in conformity with the regulations of this House, and I shall do my best to alter it, and if I cannot do that to my own satisfaction I shall do my best to induce this House to reject the measure. The Bill is not in conformity with the recommendations of the Committee, and I think we ought to have further inquiry into it. Her Majesty's Government are rushing this question, and that fact is strongly impressed upon my mind. I think it would be very much better if this Bill was either withdrawn or sent to a Select Committee. Then the different interests in the country would be able to see how it affects them, and on

that ground I shall support the proposal that this Bill be sent to a Select Committee.

*SIR JOHN LUBBOCK: After the unfair remarks made by the hon. Gentleman opposite, perhaps the House will allow me to say a word or two. In the first place, with regard to the charge as to canvassing or obstruction, I indignantly deny that there has been anything of the kind, so far, at any rate, as those with whom I am acting. The hon. Gentleman complained of some circular issued, as he alleged, on behalf of the company to members of this House, but when I asked him to quote the circular, it appeared that he had not seen it. I deny entirely that any circular which I have issued bears out the statement made by the hon. Member, or has been issued by us on behalf of the Company. Certainly we were asked to come down here and support the reference to a Select Committee, but there is nothing unusual in that being done, and I entirely deny that that was done in the interests of the National Telephone Company. So far from the proposal to refer the Bill to a Select Committee being done in the interests of the Company, I have been informed that the directors, if they vote at all, will do so with the hon. Member for Northampton upon this question and not with us. I support this proposal because we object to Governments or municipalities engaging in commercial transactions. At the beginning of the session we found that municipal trading was obtaining greater and greater dimensions. I brought the matter before the House, at the request of the London, and other Chambers of Commerce, and the First Lord of the Treasury not only promised us a Committee to enquire into it but he also said that he considered the matter of so much importance that he suggested that it should be a Joint Committee of both Houses. The London Chamber of Commerce, supported by most of the Chambers of Commerce in this country, are opposed to this Bill because it is a great extension of municipal trading. The London Chamber of Commerce unanimously passed a resolution as follows:

"That it is undesirable that the Postmaster-General should license county boroughs to provide systems of public telephone communication pending the report of the Joint Committee of the two Houses appointed to consider the whole question of municipal trading, and they

urge upon the Government, pending the report of that Joint Committee, that the Telephone Communication Bill should be postponed."

If this Bill goes to a Grand Committee the London Chamber of Commerce will have no opportunity of being heard and stating their views. But if the measure goes to a Select Committee they would have that opportunity. We do complain that Her Majesty's Government, after having promised this Committee, have not been able to appoint it; but they do complain that the Government, while they have not appointed the Committee on Municipal Trading, are themselves proposing a great extension of municipal trading. Surely the various Chambers of Commerce in the country are entitled to have an opportunity of stating their reasons before a Committee of this House for passing the resolutions which they have adopted. Again, the Society of Arts and Manufactures, who have done much to promote the manufactures of this country, is also opposed to the Bill, and they have passed a resolution to the effect:

"That no further powers for such purposes ought to be granted to such bodies."

The Society of Arts and Manufactures is a very influential body, and they certainly are not opponents of Her Majesty's Government, and when they pass a resolution of this kind, and ask to be heard, surely they ought to be afforded that opportunity. Then, again, the Institute of Electrical Engineers have passed a resolution that it is undesirable that legislation should be passed to encourage the undertaking of telephonic communication by public bodies. All I am asking is that these very important bodies should be given by the Government an opportunity of stating to this House their reasons for the opinions which they have expressed upon this subject. I do not deny that if we send this Bill to a Select Committee we cannot probably pass it this year; but whether we pass it this year or next year it is much more important that it should be a wise

Bill, and that it should be seriously and carefully considered. I have shown the House that bodies pre-eminently qualified to express an opinion on this subject have urged on the Government the desirability of taking the course we have suggested, and under the circumstances I earnestly hope that the Government will take those recommendations into consideration, and that we shall be afforded an opportunity of stating in a Committee of this House the reasons which make us believe that if the House passes the Bill, as it now stands it will be adopting an unwise course. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury in his speech gave strong reasons against nationalisation, and yet he proposes to nationalise the whole metropolitan area. He gave strong reasons in another part of his speech why private enterprise should be encouraged.

MR. SPEAKER: The right hon. Gentleman is now discussing the merits of the Bill.

*SIR JOHN LUBBOCK: I only wish, Mr. Speaker, to point out that the Bill really does not carry out the views which the right hon. Gentleman expressed. I have shown that important institutions throughout the country are anxious to lay their views before the Government, and I accordingly urge on the Government to send this Bill to a Select Committee.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I can assure my right hon. friend that nobody in this House thinks that any stain attaches to his character in connection with any proceedings he may have thought it right to take in this matter. If there is a man in this House—and there are many men—above suspicion, my right hon. friend is certainly that man. I cannot, however, agree with the views of my right hon. friend on this matter, and I do earnestly hope that the House will not further prolong this discussion, but will take the only course which will enable us to pass the Bill this session, and bring to an end what everybody on both sides of the House agrees to be a most unsatisfactory condition of affairs. I have really not heard any objection to the course proposed, except the objection stated by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton, that because there have been what he describes as negotiations between the Telephone

Company and my right hon. friend who is in charge of this Bill, therefore it would be proper to discuss this measure in the Committee of the whole House and not in a Committee upstairs. I fail to see that that fact is in any sense an argument leading to the conclusion which the hon. Gentleman endeavoured to establish. The whole result and upshot of what has passed is not that a concession has been made to the Company but that the conditions which were to be embodied in a Treasury Minute are to be embodied in the Bill. On the other hand, the Company have entirely given up their position as monopolists, to which great objection has been taken, and they have, as is well known to the House, made an agreement which will, in our judgment at all events, give facilities for that competition which I agree is so desirable for the healthy development of any great interest. My right hon. friend says that he speaks for the Chamber of Commerce of London. I did not understand that he agreed with the Chamber of Commerce, and indeed I rather gathered from his speech that he differed from it. The London Chamber of Commerce desires that the telephone system should become like the telegraphs, a Government monopoly. My right hon. friend objects to that even more than to municipalisation, and I really do not understand why he should have made himself the spokesman of a body from which he differs.

*SIR JOHN LUBBOCK: The resolution of the London Chamber of Commerce urged on the Government that it was undesirable that the Postmaster-General should licence county boroughs to provide a system of proper telephonic communication pending the Report of the Joint Committee about to be appointed by the two Houses to consider the whole question of municipal trading, and also that pending the Report of that Committee the Telegraphs (Telephonic Communication, etc.) Bill should be postponed.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: My right hon. friend forgets that while no doubt the London Chamber of Commerce would like to see this Bill postponed, as would also my right hon. friend himself, yet the Chamber desires to see the whole matter in the hands of the Government, whereas my right hon. friend wishes it to remain

in the hands of a private company. There cannot be more divergent theories than those advocated by the Chamber of Commerce and my right hon. friend. I would be out of order if I attempted to show that if this Bill passes in the form in which it now stands it will destroy a monopoly which I do not think on the whole is for the benefit of the country, and therefore I will content myself with impressing on all the members of the House who desire to see this Bill passed that the only course which will make it possible in the short space of time which now remains to us to pass it will be the course we propose.

MR. STUART (Shoreditch): I sincerely trust that the House will not refer this Bill to a Select Committee, for the directly opposite reason to that given by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London in favour of referring it to such a Committee. I consider it all important that this Bill, which I believe to be a good Bill, and which I desire to see passed, should be passed during the present session. I was one who expressed the view which I still hold, that it would be dangerous that it should be even referred to a Grand Committee, but if it is referred to a Select Committee there is an end of it altogether. What would a Select Committee do? It would open up the whole question again. Counsel would no doubt be engaged, and parties would be heard, and there would be long inquiries such as have been made twice already in the most efficient manner possible by one of the strongest Committees on which I ever sat—the late *Telephones Committee*—and presided over by one of the strongest and ablest chairmen under whom I ever had the pleasure of serving. If we set up another Committee now, we would be exactly where we were two or three years ago. I am not going into the merits of the Bill, but I should have preferred that a measure of this kind should be considered by a Committee of the whole House. Just now we shrink from suggestions of arrangements and compromises, but possibly we might have another opinion if the details were before the House. I throw the responsibility for this Bill on the Government. I throw the responsibility on them to carry this Bill either in its present form or as near its present form as possible, and I do so

with a certain confidence, because I believe it to be in the hands of the Secretary for the Treasury, who is as determined as I and others are to see this through to the best issue. Should he fail, should his hands be bound, or should the stroke be averted, then I will regret it on his own account, and also on account of the Government, the House, and the country. If the Bill is referred to a Select Committee, then good-bye to it. The responsibility of the Government will be at an end, and all our hope of securing action this year, or perhaps for many years to come, will vanish. Let the responsibility lie with the Government. They have carried through measures without alteration in this House before, and I do not see why they should not carry this Bill without alteration; but if there is to be an alteration let it be for the better. A Select Committee would, however, be death to the Bill.

*MR. W. F. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, *Abercromby*): It is not to be wondered at that the hon. Gentleman speaks with some warmth, for the simple reason that London has got all it wants. But Liverpool now desires to get what has been given to London. Speaking for one division of the City of Liverpool, and with the approval of the corporation, I am entirely opposed to this Bill. Since the Second Reading many things have happened. The right hon. Gentleman brought in the Bill to beat down the Telephone Company at any cost. I am not interested in the Telephone Company, and those for whom I speak are not concerned with its future; but the principle of the Bill was to introduce competition in order to reduce the selling value of the company.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is now entering into matters not relevant to the question before the House.

*MR. W. F. LAWRENCE: What I have been endeavouring to show is that as the Bill has been very much altered and as its principle has been changed, we should therefore send it to a more deliberative body than a Grand Committee. It is a well-known fact that as the session goes on the Grand Committee becomes very attenuated, and the members do not give that close deliberation to a matter of this importance which the

case demands. It seems to me there has been distinctly a new departure under the arrangements made with the "lobbyers" during the last two or three days. By the original Bill the municipalities were to compete with the company, but now these bodies are not going to have any competition in their districts.

MR. HANBURY: No.

*MR. W. F. LAWRENCE: Well, I think I read this morning that the National Telephone Company are to pledge themselves to open no new exchanges where they have no exchanges now. If the right hon. Gentleman will not allow the present company to open new exchanges and not allow other companies to open exchanges, then when the municipal bodies go in for the telephone business they will be protected from competition.

MR. HANBURY: May I be allowed to explain what has been done. The National Telephone Company have agreed that they will not work outside the areas where they have at present exchanges. That is to say, their general licence to run all over the country ceases, and they are confined to their existing areas. But in all other areas there is a perfect right reserved, either to the local authority or to a new company.

*MR. W. F. LAWRENCE: I understood the right hon. Gentleman has no intention of allowing other companies to set up where the municipal bodies start the telephone business.

MR. HANBURY: I did not say so.

*MR. W. F. LAWRENCE: Well, it is a natural deduction from what the right hon. Gentleman did say, viz., that the municipalities would be "protected." Therefore, I maintain, we have a new issue to put before the House. The municipal bodies are to impinge upon the work of the nation in a matter cognate to the postal service, and, without competition, they are to be entitled to engage in such an industrial enterprise, not only in their own areas, but sometimes outside their boundaries. We may fairly demand further information before we proceed to this new departure. Inasmuch as the Government have given notice of an inquiry into the whole system of municipal trading, it seems unreasonable to expect us now to sanction this wide extension of the principle without having more care-

fully examined into the subject. For these reasons, and inasmuch as a year's delay will not make very much difference to the National Telephone Company or to the convenience of the public, I shall support the reference of the Bill to a Select Committee.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): The remarks of the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down illustrate the difficulty in which the House has been placed, and this has not been much assisted by the interruptions of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury. Since the motion to refer the Bill to a Grand Committee was made, a revolutionary change has taken place in the attitude of the Government. Now, that change has been discussed at considerable length by the Secretary to the Treasury, and I suppose he must have been in order in doing so, and the First Lord of the Treasury has also alluded to it to-day.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member was not in his place probably when I stated that the right hon. Gentleman was not strictly in order in making his statement, but as it was with the general consent and desire of the House he was allowed to do so.

MR. LOUGH: I feel I cannot follow out the matter at all; but my point is that we ought to have fuller details of this revolutionary change before we arrive at a decision. I was glad to hear that the hon. Member for Hoxton did not oppose so strongly the reference of the Bill to a Grand Committee. I was not opposed to a Grand Committee. But I do not know what to say now. I want to know whether, before we decide, we cannot have fuller information on the important matters referred to by the Secretary to the Treasury. We are not in the position we were in when the Second Reading was taken; and we should do nothing in the dark. Will the right hon. Gentleman lay a Paper on the Table embodying fully and clearly the arrangements, which appear to be revolutionary, that have been made? If he does that I will not persist.

MR. HANBURY: All the suggestions of the Government will be effectually embodied, by means of new clauses, in the Bill which will be presented to the Grand Committee.

Mr. W. F. Lawrence.

MR. LOUGH: I am glad to have got that from the right hon. Gentleman. Since he now tells us that these arrangements will be fully embodied in the Bill referred to the Grand Committee, and since the First Lord has assured us that the only way to get the Bill through this session is by referring it to a Grand Committee, I will not take the responsibility of opposing it further.

*MR. FAITHFULL BEGG (Glasgow, St. Rollox): I should like to state my reasons for objecting to the Bill being sent to a Grand Committee, and my preference for sending it to a Select Committee. The situation as it stands now is completely altered from what it was only a few days ago; and it is essential, in view of the changes in the Government position, that evidence should be brought in support of these new proposals. If that is not done it would be impossible to come to a correct conclusion as to these changes. I wish to refer to a remark made in this House a few days ago by the hon. Member for Northampton, who gave it as his opinion that I was in some measure personally connected with the National Telephone Company, and that I was the stockbroker of the company. I wish to assure my hon. friend that he is entirely wrong in that statement. I have absolutely no connection with that company in any shape or form, and am not a shareholder in it. That leads me to say that in connection with these new arrangements which have been come to between the company and the Government, no objections on my part have been removed. I stand exactly where I did; and I advocate a reference of the Bill to a Select Committee, in order to get evidence, instead of to a Grand Committee, where no evidence can be taken. I must mention first the financial aspect of the question. When the licences stood to be terminated in 1911, the financial aspect of the matter had to be approached from a particular standpoint; but since the Government contemplate extending licences for a period of 25 years, totally different financial problems will have to be considered. I am prepared to argue that this extension of the licences for 25 years will increase their value exceedingly, and make it more difficult to purchase them, and I am convinced more strongly than ever that nationalisation is the only remedy. By

referring the Bill to a Select Committee we can lead evidence on that part of the problem. Another very material and radical change introduced within the last few days, of which there was not one single word in the Bill itself, and not a single syllable, except to the contrary effect, in the Treasury minute, is the proposal to permit competition, not only by municipalities but also by companies. That fundamentally changes the whole basis of the proposals as put before the House when the finance resolution was taken in Committee, when the Bill was introduced, and at all subsequent stages of the discussion. Here is a quotation from the report of the Select Committee last year on that point—they were contemplating certain contingencies:

“The difficulty arises in holding the balance equally between the local authorities and the company, that while it seems generally admitted to be desirable in the public interest that all licences should terminate in 1911,” etc.

This shows clearly that the only fact in connection with licences which was in the mind of the Select Committee, was the date 1911. But that is not all. In the Treasury minute which has since been published, there is evidence of exactly the same attitude of mind. In that minute, at page 4, clause 10, it is laid down that all licences will be terminable on 31st. December, 1911. It is perfectly clear that in the two earlier stages—both in the case of the Report of the Select Committee of the House, and in the case of the Treasury minute issued by my right hon. friend in explanation of his Bill—it was laid down as a fundamental principle that all licences should terminate in 1911. That principle has been departed from. We want to know the reason why the Government has departed from it, and why they are willing to give this extension of time. They called evidence on the subject, and not only is that the case, but I know my right hon. friend himself always held the view, until quite recently, as to 1911 being the date. Well, I pass from that to speak of the question of the competition of companies. That is also a fundamental change which has been made in the proposals of the Government since they were brought before the House. The Select Committee had no reference made to it on the subject of the competition of companies. There is not a word in the evi-

dence or the Report upon the question, and there is nothing in my right hon. friend's Bill or the Treasury minute. This is what my right hon. friend said in April, 1898 :

"I do not believe that competition by companies would be by any means the proper course to take."

Further on he said :

"If, as I think, companies are practically impossible."

That was the opinion of my right hon. friend twelve months ago, and yet he now comes down to the House and advocates such competition as one of the cardinal features of his scheme, notwithstanding that it is not in his Bill or Treasury minute. That alone is a sufficient reason for advocating that this matter should go to a Committee, where we can take evidence on these points and clear up these matters of difficulty. I do not know that I need detain the House any longer on this subject. There is, however, one other quotation that I should like to give before I sit down. Here is what my right hon. friend said :

"It is impossible to bind our successors, but assuming that they are men of ordinary common-sense they will not allow the licences to go beyond that year."

And yet he comes before us to-day and advocates the very thing which twelve months ago he told us nobody of ordinary common-sense would do.

*MR. SPEAKER : Order, order ! The hon. Member is now arguing the merits of the proposed change.

*MR. FAITHFULL BEGG : I knew that I should have difficulty in further discussing that matter, and so I will merely conclude by saying that we require to know something more about these changes proposed by the Government, and about this "arrangement" which does not involve a "concession." For this reason I think the House will do wisely to send this Bill to a Committee before whom evidence may be given, in order that these points may be cleared up.

MR. BROADHURST (Leicester) : I understand that there are some very important Amendments to the Bill which it is proposed to put on the Paper after

Mr. Faithfull Begg.

this motion is carried to-day, and to a large extent we are asked to vote in the dark.

MR. HANBURY : I fully explained the matter.

MR. BROADHURST : Yes, I know the Secretary to the Treasury is usually correct in his statements, but when Ministers' statements are reduced to clauses they sometimes appear in a different form altogether and have a different meaning. Now, I do not accuse the right hon. Gentleman of intending to do anything of the kind, but we poor creatures have been caught so often that we naturally remember the fire in which our fingers have been burned. Now, Sir, as regards the question as to the Committee this Bill should go to. I should certainly support the motion for the Grand Committee on Trade. I cannot but do this in the interests of my constituents. I represent one of the largest trading communities of the country, and they are pressingly anxious for some improvement in the telephone system, which is important to their daily lives and trade. It is more important in many respects than the telegraph system, especially in a commercial community where all the trade consists so much of detail, as the trade of Leicester does. In their interests I am bound to support the proposal — I have no choice. The right hon. Gentleman dictates to us as to how we should act in this matter. I have no option but to support him if he persists in his endeavour to send this Bill to a Grand Committee on Trade. I have been a member of the Grand Committees on Trade much longer than the right hon. Gentleman, and I have had considerable experience in the working of those bodies. I was a member of the first Grand Committee on Trade which sat in this House. The right hon. Gentleman the Colonial Secretary was a leading member, and very well adapted to that particular class of legislation. But this is essentially a national question, and ought to have been decided on the floor of the House. There is no one obstructing the passing of this Bill so much as the Government themselves. I believe this Bill might have been got through the House at two sittings. But when we get upstairs to the Grand Committee on Trade all the

experts and authorities on obstruction, opposition, and contention, may be members of that Committee, and there we may be kept fencing about till the middle of July, when the chances will be considerably reduced of the Bill being passed into law this session. We are as anxious about the right hon. Gentleman's offspring as he himself is, and we who have had longer—I do not say a better—experience than he has, feel convinced that to refer a Bill of this contentious nature to the Grand Committee at this period of the session is not at all encouraging to those who want a better telephone system. The fact is, the Government themselves have lost time. We must not mention Bills by name, but every man in the House, on whichever side he sits, could in a moment name a Bill which might have waited till this Bill had been passed; it might have waited even till next session, or till the end of the present Parliament.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That is not relevant to the question.

MR. BROADHURST: I am obliged to you, Sir, for recalling me to the paths of duty and order again. My enthusiasm for this Bill has entirely led me astray, for which I apologise. Well, is it too late to appeal to Her Majesty's Government to still let the Committee stage take place in this House instead of going to a Grand Committee? That is the whole question with which I am concerned. If the Government will, at the eleventh hour, repent of their sins, and bring the Bill into this House in Committee, I will support them in every Division, if it is a progressive Division, in order to get the Bill through. That is a perfectly honest and straightforward pledge, and one which I have never ventured to make before in my life, and I do not know that I shall repeat it unless the right hon. Gentleman accepts. We know the strength of the right hon. Gentleman if he likes to exercise it. We all regard him as a lion. He has been caught in the proverbial net, and we are the little mice endeavouring to release him from what we consider an unwise complication of interests, which has entwined him and apparently overpowered him for the time being. As regards this measure, I have not been spoken to by a single person, and the right hon. Baronet's circular has not reached me. I never

fail to read anything to which his name is attached, and if I had received a card I should certainly have read it. The constant cry of the Chambers of Commerce is that you should nationalise the whole of the telephone system, as you have done the telegraphs. Failing that, we must expect as much as we can get from you. But that is no reason why we should not tell you that you ought to have done better. The right hon. Gentleman had the power and the opportunity, and if he had insisted that the Bill should have been passed through Committee in this House the Government must have given way. I do not think, if I may say so without offence, that the arguments of the right hon. Baronet were as good as he usually employs to convince this House of the policy which he wishes to pursue. I think they are rather weak. I do not think they are arguments that you could rely upon, but perhaps he has been overborne by the great City authority, the Chamber of Commerce, into advocating a policy which is evidently not one which commends itself to the House or the country. I therefore cannot support him on this occasion. This being a national question, and not a technical question, requiring expert advice, it is far better that a Bill of this kind should be dealt with by the whole House in Committee, and not by a Grand Committee upstairs, and I hope that some effort may yet be made to see if that course cannot be adopted.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): It is most interesting to see the support which the Secretary to the Treasury gets from the other side of the House; I should have supposed that this was a measure proposed by the front Opposition bench, and strenuously resisted by the Tories on this side. The difficulty of this discussion is greatly added to by the changes which have taken place in the Bill itself. The hon. Member for Leicester says he supports the Bill because it is the child of the Secretary of the Treasury. But it is not the same child; the child has been changed at birth, and the present child is very much less like its father than the other was. Of course, we may not allude specifically to details as to the difference in the features of the two children. The First Lord of the Treasury says that the reference of this Bill to the Standing Committee is the only course that

affords a chance of passing this Bill into law this session. But what is the hurry? It is a Bill to empower the Government to spend two millions in competing with a private company. Why this hurry? Have we not spent millions enough this year? The one hiatus in my unfailing admiration for the nineteen men of genius who form Her Majesty's Government is this: their one weak point is finance, and when they come to their end "Finance" will be written on their grave.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! I hope the hon. Member will endeavour to keep to the question.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: We have already this session intercepted two millions from the National Debt Extinction Fund, and we passed a resolution the other day for voting four millions.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! If the hon. Member is endeavouring to speak to the question, he is singularly unsuccessful.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Inasmuch as the central principle of this Bill is to spend two millions more than the money we have already spent, I say there can be no hurry to begin the expenditure this year, and consequently there is no immediate hurry for passing this Bill. In saying this I am applying the argument used by the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury himself, when he says the only chance is in referring this Bill to the Grand Committee. I am not enormously enamoured of this Bill; there are certain points which ought to be cleared up. But there is one capital and absolutely conclusive reason for not pressing forward the Bill at this time. Nobody denies that on the merits of the case it would be a good thing to refer this Bill to a Select Committee, which would take evidence and consider matters entirely *de novo*.

MR. BROADHURST: I deny it.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Really, the support the hon. Gentleman opposite gives to my right hon. friend is very uncertain.

MR. STUART: If the hon. gentleman had been present when I was speaking he would have known that I said, rightly or wrongly, that my view, as a member of the Select Committee, was that the whole question had been sufficiently gone into by the Select Committee.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: The hon. *Mr. Gibson Bowles*.

Gentleman is wrong. I did listen to his speech, with that interest which his speeches invariably command, and with that disagreement which they almost invariably arouse in me. How can he say that all matters connected with this Bill have been considered by the Select Committee, when the Bill has been invented since the Select Committee was appointed, and has been changed since it was invented? In his impetuosity and compassion for the Tory Party he has made a great mistake. Now, my last reason why there is no reason to be in a hurry is that the Government have insisted upon appointing a Committee which is to deal with the very centre and marrow of the question—the subject of municipal trading. Suppose that Committee reports altogether against municipal trading—

MR. LABOUCHERE: It has done so.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: It has not come into existence yet. My submission is that we should await the Report of that Committee which is about to be appointed.

MR. PROVAND (Glasgow, Blackfriars): No such motion is on the Paper.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: The hon. Gentleman must be unaware of the facts.

MR. PROVAND: No such thing is mentioned on the Paper as a Committee on Municipal Trading.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: If the hon. Gentleman looks at the Order Book, he will find the motion in the name of the principal Whip of the Government.

MR. PROVAND: It is not on the Paper now; it has been withdrawn.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: It may not be down for to-day, but that does not affect the question. The intention is to appoint the Committee. Why, then, anticipate its decision? I repeat there is no hurry. There are a great many points which a Select Committee ought to inquire into; and, therefore, if this motion is pressed to a Division, I shall, unless the right hon. Gentleman is able to come to such arrangement with us as he did with the Telephone Company, feel it my duty to support the motion to refer the Bill to a Select Committee.

*LORD E. FITZMAURICE (Wilts, Cricklade): I am afraid I shall bring

myself under the censure of the hon. Gentleman who last spoke, by announcing my intention to support the Government on the present occasion. The House will remember that my right hon. friend the Member for the Stirling Burghs announced that the only reason which induced him, in face of the sudden and unexpected announcement of the decision of the Government, to refer this Bill to a Standing Committee was the assurance of the Leader of the House that it afforded the only means of passing the Bill into law this session. Has anything since occurred to induce any hon. Member on this side to alter his view and to support the reference to a Select Committee? My hon. friend the Member for King's Lynn says that on the merits everybody thinks there ought to be a Select Committee. I really must traverse that statement altogether. We think there have been Select Committees of Inquiry enough already, and that another Select Committee is merely a plea for further delay. The second reason put forward by my hon. friend was that as the Government were committed to the appointment of a Committee on Municipal Trading, we are therefore stopped from objecting to further inquiry into this matter. But the Committee on Municipal Trading is in the air: we know nothing about it. It is quite true there was on the Paper a notice for the appointment of such a Committee, but it has disappeared. ("No, no!") At any rate it is not being proceeded with. Things occasionally hang about the Order book in a most mysterious manner, but at the same time they are known to be nothing but dead horses. Possibly there may be an intention of proceeding with the appointment of this Committee, but even if that be so there is nothing to justify further delay in this particular matter. On the contrary, I imagine the experience we would gain as to the working of the telephone system by municipal authorities, which would naturally come into existence slowly and gradually, might afford most important evidence for consideration by the Committee on the general subject of municipal trading. For the reason that no material change has taken place in the situation since my right hon. friend threw the whole responsibility on the Government for the course adopted as the only means of passing the Bill this session, I shall feel justified in supporting

the alternative of sending this Bill to the Standing Committee.

*MR. GEDGE (Walsall): I wish to say something upon my own part and on the part of all those who wish to send this Bill to a Select Committee. All those who favour the Select Committee have been accused of having been lobbied and being interested in the National Telephone Company. The hon. Member for Shoreditch was particularly indignant on the last occasion this Bill was before the House, and spoke as if he were the only honest man in the House. Now, I do not know any one who has been what is called lobbied, or who has any improper motive in making the request for a Select Committee. I certainly have no connection with the National Telephone Company other than that of a subscriber to their service, which might be better; and it is because it might be better and is not, that we all desire to see the telephones in other hands. At the same time there are several things that require to be thrashed out by a Select Committee, which could not be thrashed out by a Grand Committee. There is the financial question, for instance. As I understand there will be a waste of many thousands a year if the Government plan be adopted. Whether I am right or wrong in that it is a question of importance which must be gone into very carefully. Notice has been given of the appointment of a Joint Committee of the two Houses to consider the general question of the limits and conditions to be imposed on Municipal Trading. The noble Lord opposite describes this as a dead horse, but that could hardly be, when the Patronage Secretary to the Treasury, on behalf of the Government, gives formal notice for such a Committee. The Government must think it desirable and in the public interest, and if that is their opinion then we shall get the Committee appointed. Pending that Committee's enquiry and report, it is unwise to pass this Bill, which entrusts municipalities with the large operations all over the country, which the general extension of the telephonic system will necessitate. There are two sides to this question, and some of us think that this vast extension of municipal trading ought not to be allowed. Having regard to the way the Second Reading was sprung upon us we shall do what we can to prevent this Bill becoming law this year by voting for a Select Committee, because we do not think the Bill a good Bill.

SIR J. T. WOODHOUSE (Huddersfield): The question before the House is whether this Bill shall be sent to a Grand Committee or a Select Committee. Those who are in favour of a Select Committee are, first of all, those who object to the extension of the telephone service to the municipalities; and, secondly, those who desire to kill the Bill under any circumstances. The terms of the reference to the Select Committee appointed last session by this House covered the whole of the ground which those who now ask for another Select Committee desire to be inquired into. Is it not trifling with the House to suggest, having regard to all the circumstances, that another Select Committee should sit upon this matter? No one can possibly allege that there is not an abundance of material before the House on which to form a clear and decided opinion upon the matter. Where was the right hon. Gentleman the Member for London University when the proposal was made last year to elect this Committee? Not a word of objection was raised then; yet, if exception was to be taken, that was the time when it should have been done. It is not fair to the Committee who sat for so many weeks to suggest that all this matter should now be gone into again. Whilst wishing well to the progress of this Bill, I reserve fully my opinion of the alteration which has been suggested by the concessions made to the National Telephone Company. They may be wise or unwise; they are not yet reduced to such a position that they can be reported to the House, but I apprehend the House will have the right to amend this Bill on the Report stage.

SIR HARRY BULLARD (Norwich): I thought that the Committee thrashed out the whole of this question. The Bill may not be perfect, but we shall have the privilege of making it so if we can on the report. I am one of those who would like to see progress made in this matter, and I cannot understand why so many members are hostile to so useful a measure. The National Telephone Company have done good work, but we want to see better work done, and this Bill will be conducive to that end, and that is the reason I support this going to the Grand Committee.

*MR. CHARLES MCARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange): I do not agree with the hon. Member that there is a desire on the

part of those who object to this Bill to impede the progress and development of telephonic communication. We desire to accelerate it, but we think the Bill before the House is calculated to rather retard and defeat that object than to accelerate it. I deprecate altogether the personalities which some members have thought fit to indulge in, in the course of this Debate, and I do not believe that anybody taking part in this Debate has been animated by any improper motive in desiring that the Bill should be sent to a Select Committee. Their only desire was that the progress of this Bill should be facilitated. What I wish to point out is that although reference has been made to the Report of the Committee of 1898, it is yet a fact that the Bill does not carry out the recommendations of that Committee.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member will not be in order in discussing that.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee) rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put"; but

*MR. SPEAKER withheld his assent, because it appeared to him that the House was prepared shortly to come to a decision without that Motion.

MR. CHARLES MCARTHUR: One great reason why I think the Bill should be referred to a Select Committee is that many changes have been introduced into it. First, the Sanitary Districts objected, and they were included in the Bill. Then the company promoters and the subscribers had to be satisfied, and finally the National Telephone Company had to be satisfied, and really the only people who now remain out are the advocates of nationalisation. The Bill in its present form is most unsatisfactory.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member will be out of order in discussing that.

*MR. CHARLES MCARTHUR: I can only ask the Government not to take this leap in the dark. We want further light on this subject, and that can only be obtained by referring the Bill to a Select Committee. On the ground that the Bill does not follow the recommendations of the previous Select Committee, I earnestly press that the matter be referred for further consideration to another Select Committee.

MR. COLVILLE (Lanark, N.E.): I also sat upon the Select Committee of last year, and I have very great pleasure in

heartily supporting the right hon. Gentleman who proposes that this Bill should be referred to a Grand Committee. I agree with the hon. Member for Norwich that a reference to a Select Committee would merely mean delay. I differ from the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, and I think that a proposal to nationalise this very useful and necessary invention would have the effect of indefinitely postponing this Bill, which I trust will be referred to a Grand Committee and passed into law this year.

Question put, and agreed to.

Main Question put, and agreed to:—
Bill committed to the Standing Committee on Trade, etc.

SMALL HOUSES (ACQUISITION OF OWNERSHIP) BILL.

As amended (by the Standing Committee), considered.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): The Amendment which I have to propose is to insert and substitute a new clause for Clause 8, which I shall subsequently move to delete. Clause 8 proposes to establish a local registry, but on examination we find that what practically amounts to a pledge was given to the Law Society that the compulsory provisions of the Land Transfer Act should not be extended for a term of three years. Under those circumstances, it was represented to the Government that it would be a breach of faith to introduce into this Bill a system which would practically extend the principles and practice of the registration of land. Under the circumstances, I propose to substitute a local registry which will enable the local authorities to keep an account of their transactions under this Bill, and I do not propose, as was originally intended, an extension of the Land Transfer Act. I beg to move.

New clause:—

“(1) A local authority shall keep at their offices a book containing a list of any advances made by them under this Act, and shall enter therein with regard to each advance—(a) a description of the house in respect of which the advance is made; (b) the amount advanced; (c) the amount for the time being repaid; (d) the name of the proprietor for the time being of the house; and (e) such other particulars as the local authority think fit to enter.

“(2) The book shall be open to inspection at the office of the local authority during office

hours free of charge.” — (Mr. Secretary Chamberlain.)

brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made and Question proposed,
“That the clause be read a second time.”

MR. CALDWELL (Lanark, Mid): I must express my surprise at this change in the policy of the Government. When the Bill was introduced, it was stated that its principle advantage would be the facility with which it would provide for the transfer and acquisition of title, and also the very small cost which would be entailed. Now Clause 8, which it is proposed to take out, provides that a local authority may make advances under this Act, and that they shall cause the ownership to be registered under the Land Transfer Acts. The great object of this clause was to provide for an efficient system of registration. Then, the clause which it is proposed to leave out contains another very important proviso as regards the expense. It provides for the framing of rules with regard to the registration of ownership and for the easy transfer of such ownership, and the cost of such transfer was not to exceed 10s. The great merit of this Bill was the facility which is afforded for the transfer of land and the cheap cost of such transfer. Everybody knows that with regard to small property the fees for conveyance and transfer may be £10 or £12, and there is practically no limit to the amount. The object of the Bill is the simplification of title and facility of transfer, and it is not merely that the working man should acquire his property cheaper, but that he should be given better facilities for transferring it. The Government have not given us any good excuse for this new departure, for it is no excuse to say that some kind of assurance was given to the Law Society that the Land Transfer Act was not to be extended for three years. I protest against the Government giving any such undertaking to a society outside which would bind this House.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: That is not so. The pledge was a public pledge given while the Land Transfer Act was passing through this House. My attention was called to it afterwards, and although I entirely agree with what the hon. Member has said with regard to the value of such a clause, I do not think the House would desire that the Government should be guilty of a direct breach of

faith not only to the Law Society but also to this House.

MR. CALDWELL: But it will not do to spring this upon the House and say that there was an undertaking given which is the foundation for cutting out this clause. I object altogether to this clause being substituted, for the Government is only part of the House, and the rest of the House are not bound by any such undertaking. It does not seem to me that there is any reason whatever for cutting out this clause. Even if there was an undertaking of that kind the operation of this clause might have been postponed for three years. I do not think the House ought to give up this important clause because a certain undertaking has been given to the Law Society, who wish to make a profit out of these transactions, and we ought not to recognise any such undertakings as fettering the hands of this House. With regard to the clause which it is proposed to substitute I am surprised that it should be raised here, for there is no relationship whatever between Clause 8 and this new clause. I venture to say that this proposal is only a mere pretence to get rid of this inconvenient Clause 8 by providing something which seems to resemble it.

MR. BILLSON (Halifax): I do not remember any such undertaking being mentioned in this House, and I think the bringing in of this clause by the right hon. Gentleman at the present moment is a very unfortunate proceeding. This Bill went to the Grand Committee where no mention was made of any intention to make any such alteration, and no opportunity was given in Grand Committee to call the attention of those interested in the subject in the country. And now when the Bill comes on at the Report stage there is put down a clause which substitutes something entirely different. I fully agree with what my hon. friend has said—that it is difficult to suppose that this kind of legislation can be even called a substitute for the clause which is to be left out. He says that it is being done in accordance with a pledge given to the Law Society, and consequently he is giving another kind of registration. This reform in the simplification of the transfer of property will only come about if we begin by doing something. If you have all your small property put upon a

Mr. J. Chamberlain.

local register it will be a great advantage, but we shall never have an efficient system unless we have a local register kept in the district where the transfer takes place. When we once get a local system of registration like that, people can go to the town hall or other building and have the alteration made at once. The advantages conferred by Clause 8 have been commented upon in various newspapers as a great boon which we are going to confer, and the Bill has been commended chiefly because it would provide for a transfer being made for the small sum of 10s. But now you have a Bill enabling municipalities to lend money, but you have not got the great improvement which I thoroughly believed the right hon. Gentleman desired to introduce. If you had left this clause in and suspended its operation for three years it would have been better than striking it out altogether. But no doubt pressure has been brought to bear on the right hon. Gentleman by various solicitors and others, and I think they have been entirely misguided in regard to the action which they have taken in regard to this matter. I would appeal to the right hon. Gentleman to consider whether he cannot continue this clause in the Bill and make some alteration as to the time when it shall operate in order to meet the objection which he has raised.

*MR. WARR (Liverpool, East Toxteth): I do not intend now to attempt to discuss the views which my hon. friend has just expressed upon the general question of registration of titles. Personally, I have much sympathy with them. I only desire to say that the Incorporated Law Society did not urge objections to the clause upon any selfish professional grounds, but because they considered that the clause as it stood would involve an expensive system, and would also involve a great deal of cumbersome officialism; and also because they regarded it as contrary to the pledge given when the Land Transfer Act of 1897 was passing through this House. The Land Transfer Act of 1897 provided that, except as to a county or part of a county, which would signify its desire that registration should be compulsorily applied for, no further order should be made under the section until the expiration of three years from the making of the first order. Accordingly this proposal would appear not only to be a violation of the pledge, but a

direct violation of the spirit of the Land Transfer Act.

MR. J. SAMUEL (Stockton) : I regret very much that the right hon. Gentleman the Colonial Secretary should have made another "graceful concession" by moving the omission of Clause 8 of this Bill. I have spoken in the Grand Committee strongly in favour of this part of the Bill, and we have complimented the right hon. Gentleman on his courage in trying to effect a change in the law with a view to simplifying the transfer of titles to property ; but now I regret to see that the right hon. Gentleman has not the courage to carry forward this important change in the law, and to adhere to his original intention. The hon. Member for Halifax said that this was the first time this matter was introduced into any measure referring to the transfer of property. I think the hon. Member is mistaken, because my predecessor in the representation of Stockton, Mr. Wrightson, introduced a Bill in 1894 which contained a similar clause. He proposed to give facilities to working men to register their titles under the Transfer Act of 1875, and he pointed out the great advantage that would be to working men who would buy property under that particular measure. The reason why he withdrew it was because of the extraordinary pressure which was brought to bear on him by the solicitors of the town he then represented, and who were practically all Conservatives. I complimented the right hon. gentleman, the Colonial Secretary, upon the re-introduction of this clause into his Bill, because I thought he would have the courage of his convictions, that he would run the gauntlet of solicitors throughout the country, and resist any pressure that might be brought to bear on the Government. We all know that the great objection to the working of this Bill is what is called the mobility of labour. Labour is a changeable commodity, and working men must go from town to town to obtain it. The principal argument used by the right hon. Gentleman in reply to that argument was, that an easy method of transfer would assist working men, and that they would be given the privilege of changing property from one to another for the small payment of ten shillings. This Measure went before the Grand Committee on Trade, and this clause went through without any comment whatever, every-

body agreeing that it initiated a very important change in the law, which I venture to say is demanded by the working classes of this country. I myself was requested to move the omission of this clause, on the ground that it would bring ruin on the legal profession. The Government, having deliberately considered it, should not have conceded the point without coming before a full House, and stating their reasons for doing so. We have had two examples to-day. We have had the Secretary to the Treasury conceding points, behind the back of the House, to the Telephone Company, and now we have the Government conceding this important point to the legal profession without the knowledge of the House. This Bill is a very defective one. I do not believe it will be of any great service to the working men of the country, but if it were to be of any service at all it would be through this clause, which provides for a transfer of property by a small payment. That would be an enormous advantage to the working classes if they purchased property under this Bill. The clause went further, and initiated a change in the law in this respect which could be applied to all property in the country. I regret very much that the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill, who I thought had the courage of his convictions, has not stood by the Bill, but has conceded to the legal profession such an important clause. I hope we shall divide against the omission of this clause, and I hope hon. Members on the other side of the House who represent working class constituencies will also object to the concession made by the Government.

MR. JOHN WILSON (Durham, Mid) : I think if there be any Gentleman in this House who has the courage of his convictions, it is the right hon. Gentleman in charge of this Bill. However much we may differ from him, all of us who have known him for any length of time must conclude that, whatever he takes in hand, he is always able and willing to support. The Government and the House find themselves in a dilemma between two alternatives—one, the promise given to the people of this country that this Bill would be introduced and passed into law ; and the other is, as we have heard for the first time to-day, that the Law Society has had a pledge given to it. The ques-

tion, therefore, is, whether the interests of the people or the interests of the Law Society weigh more. This Bill never had my full support, because I believe with the hon. Member for Stockton that it will not effect the purpose for which it is intended, and I claim to know the working man as well as any hon. Member in the House. When the promise was made to the people of this country that a Bill of this kind would be brought in, it was expected that it would be as completely in harmony with their interests as possible. The Bill has passed two important stages. It has had a Second Reading, and has been through the Grand Committee, and in neither of them has this matter of the pledge to the Law Society been even mentioned. The hon. Member for Stockton stated, very correctly, that of all the parts of the Bill there was not one that would attract the favour of the working classes as much as this clause. I do not know exactly what the situation would be if this clause be eliminated, and I should like to have some expression of opinion from the Government as to how much it would cost for the transfer of a house of the value of £200 or £250. This clause sets forth that it would cost ten shillings, and that would be a great inducement to a working man to buy a house. But if, as is suggested, it would cost £3 or £4 if the clause is omitted, then I think that would be a very serious burden on the working man as well as a large percentage on the value of the house. I would suggest to the right hon. Gentleman the Colonial Secretary, except the interests of the Law Society outweigh the interests of the working classes of this country, whether he would not consent to allow the clause to remain. If it be taken out I am sure the Bill will be much less useful. Why should the Law Society object? Are we to understand that the Law Society are looking ahead for work, and trying to keep the present mode of transfer, with all its complications and costs, in their hands? What will be the conclusion of the working men of this country if this clause is taken out at the request of the Law Society? I submit they will come to the natural and only conclusion, that one of the most useful parts of the Bill was omitted because the Law Society wished it. May I also suggest to the right hon. Gentleman in charge of this Bill that perhaps the Law

Society would allow the pledge to fall into disuse and let this clause be retained?

*MR. LOWLES (Shoreditch, Haggerston): I confess I fully share the views of the hon. Members opposite. I think it would be a most unfortunate thing if we were to attempt to contract the benefits this Bill promised to the working classes of this country. I myself regard the Bill as a serious and honest attempt to make the great mass of the working men of this country the owners of the houses in which they reside. This clause is one of the most important, and we have a right to complain that no suggestion of this alteration was made in the Grand Committee. The clause passed the Grand Committee without the slightest objection being raised against it, and it was regarded as a most wholesome change. If you omit this clause you will saddle the working men with an unjust quantity of costs. You will at the very outset destroy the good the Bill would otherwise do because the working men themselves would fight shy of it.

MR. SAMUEL EVANS (Glamorgan-shire, Mid): I hope the right hon. Gentleman has not said his last word on this matter. I suggest one way out of the difficulty. I doubt whether a pledge was given at all. It was a sort of undertaking by the Government that the Land Transfer Act of 1897 should not apply except in the limited case to which reference had been made, and only for a period of three years. I agree it is of very great importance that the clause, as it originally stood, should remain in the Bill. Otherwise the transfer of title will amount to a considerable sum, the stamp duty on £200 being £3 or £4, in addition to which lawyers' fees will have to be paid. The workman is bound to transfer his title when he moves, because he has necessarily to find his residence in the place where he finds his work, and it is very hard that he should be compelled to pay these costs. I think that is the general sense of the House. I would make a practical suggestion if the right hon. Gentleman still thinks that the pledge to which he has referred covers this case. The difficulty can be met in this way. The pledge was given two years ago for a period of three years, and it could be provided now that the clause

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should not be operative for one year. That would not be any harm, as it will take time to bring the Bill into operation. By that means you will serve the working men of the country, and you will keep the pledge said to have been given to the Law Society. I think, however, that the pledge does not cover this case at all, because, although a pledge might have been given with reference to existing titles, it would not apply to new titles to be created under this Bill.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I am not sure that I am entitled to take credit for an open mind on this question, because really my own feeling is entirely in accord with the views that have just been expressed. I do not, however, attach to it the altogether exaggerated importance which some hon. Members profess to feel, and which has led them so far as to say that the Bill itself would be useless unless this clause were retained. But no doubt it would smoothe the operation of the Bill materially, and would go a long way to removing the objection to the difficulty of transferring a title in case of change of residence. Therefore, I am most strongly desirous, if the thing can be done without breach of faith, that the clause should remain in the Bill. I am at a disadvantage, however, because my hon. and learned friend the Attorney-General is away on other important public business. It was he who had to deal with the Land Transfer Act, and he is, of course, very much better acquainted with all that passed on that occasion. If it turns out that a pledge was given, whether it were a pledge affecting the Government or the House, the Government will be bound by it. The question has been raised whether there was really anything in the nature of a pledge given at all, and, if so, whether that pledge was not discharged. It is evident, however, that the matter must be further examined by the Government, and in that examination we will have, no doubt, the assistance of the Attorney-General. In the meantime I think I may ask the permission of the House to withdraw this new clause, and we will deal with the matter in another place if it is found necessary.

Motion and clause, by leave, with drawn.

*MR. DRAGE (Derby): The object of the Amendment which stands in my name is to introduce a principle which has worked so well in Belgium that the life of the proprietor should be secured for a sum sufficient to cover the expense, wholly or partly, of the acquisition of the house. It will be seen that the result of this new clause will be that on the death of the proprietor the widow, or other representative, would obtain the house without any further payment, and no loss would be sustained where a working man had paid instalments for a number of years and died. Under the present Bill the house would be lost, and similar hardships often occur as it is with building societies. The advantage does not apply alone to the working man; it would be a great advantage also to the local authorities. They would be saved from all chance of loss, and also from the very difficult and onerous task of dealing with hard cases which might arise under the Bill as it now stands. With this clause they would be able to deal liberally with all such cases. It has a further advantage, because it is designed to encourage working men to insure their lives for a substantial sum. The House is aware that throughout the country at the present moment there are burial insurances for £10 or £20, all of which is spent on the burial expenses. There is great extravagance, and the representatives of the deceased get little or no advantage. I am informed that there are no less than seven millions of these insurances in friendly societies, and seven millions in insurance companies. The House will therefore see that this clause would extend in a most useful form the principle of insurance already widely at work. May I also point out that friendly societies have already attempted to undertake this problem of life insurance up to a limit of £200. The policies issued by friendly societies, however, according to a recent decision of the Courts, are not assignable, and that difficulty will be met if the present clause is introduced. The views which I have been able to obtain from the friendly societies appear to me to be favourable to the course which I suggest the House should take. But I am informed that the friendly societies themselves have no desire to obtain any preference over other workers' advantage, and therefore it gives me great pleasure to accept the Amend-

ment of the hon. Member for West Wolverhampton, as the expenses are already cut down as low as possible. Without my clause it is impossible for the local authorities to take collateral security, and therefore the clause would encourage the local authorities to avail themselves of the Act by giving them further security that their money would not be lost. The clause is permissive, and the local authority has, therefore, power to refuse the friendly society if insolvent, or the proprietor if unlikely to keep the policy up. It would also encourage working men to insure their lives. Above all, it would induce large bodies of working men to take an interest in the friendly societies, and in the working of the Bill, and make it as far as possible a success. Last of all, if it is possible to make the friendly societies co-operate with the local authorities it would do a good deal towards solving other problems besides the problem of housing the working classes. I beg to move the new clause.

New clause—

"The local authority may accept as collateral security a policy of assurance on the life of a proprietor granted by a friendly or other society, and in that case shall reduce the charge for interest by five shillings per centum per annum.

"On the death of the proprietor the local authority shall be entitled to give a discharge to a friendly or other society for the sum insured, and shall pay to the legal personal representative of the proprietor the balance of the insurance money after providing for the mortgage debt and for all expenses incurred by them."—(*Mr. Drage.*)

Brought up and read the first time.

Motion made and Question proposed,
"That the clause be read a second time."

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I do not see that there is any serious objection to the clause as amended. But without the Amendment I would have objected to it strongly, because I think the interest is already reduced to the lowest possible point, and the advantage to be gained by the collateral security would be so slight. The local authority, I think, will have ample security in the house, and of course if it is desired to have a collateral security, there is nothing to pre-

Mr. Drage.

vent them taking it, either in the shape of a policy of insurance, or in any other form. But it is pointed out that a life insurance policy is the worst possible form of security, for there is nothing to guarantee the continued payment of the premium. A working man may be induced this year to take out a policy of insurance on his own life, but next year he may be unwilling or unable to pay the premium, and the value of the security might therefore be destroyed. I must say that the opportunity of giving or taking this security will not be largely availed of.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): I agree with much that was said by the hon. Member who introduced the clause. I think it would have this advantage: it would point out to those borrowing on their houses that this is a good way of freeing their representatives from liability in case of the borrower's death. I am, however, very doubtful about encouraging friendly societies to extend their operations to life insurance. That is a branch of work for which, I think, they are not very well adapted. I would much prefer to insert the words, "Or other societies approved of by the local authority."

*SIR ALFRED HICKMAN (Wolverhampton, W.): I am glad that the hon. Member for Derby has accepted my Amendment. One of the great merits of the Bill is to encourage thrift in the working classes, and life insurance is a very good form of thrift. I think it is a very great matter to invite the co-operation of the friendly societies.

MR. SAMUEL EVANS: I differ entirely from hon. Members who have spoken as to this new clause. I consider that, in the first place, it is unnecessary, and in the second place it is most dangerous. It is said that one of the objects of the Bill is to bring the friendly societies in co-operation with the local authorities. That is not the object of the Bill at all. The object of the Bill is to enable working men to acquire their houses on cheap and easy terms. The clause is unnecessary because, as the right hon. the Colonial Secretary has said, the local authorities, if they like to do so, can accept the collateral security of a policy of life insurance, or any other form of security. The clause is dangerous,

because it might induce the local authorities to take up the position that they ought to insist on some other security beyond the security of the value of the house before they would make an advance. Life insurance may be a very good way of providing for old age, but it is outside the scope of the Bill. What reason is there for compelling a working man who has, perhaps, gone the length of his tether in his efforts to build or buy a house, to insure his life before he gets the benefit of the Bill?

THE SOLICITOR - GENERAL (Sir R. B. FINLAY, Inverness Burghs): I think that under the Bill, as it stands, it is perfectly competent for the local authority to accept a policy of life insurance, or any other form of collateral security. But I do not think the danger which the hon. Member for Mid Glamorganshire sees in the proposed clause is likely to arise.

MR. BIRRELL (Fife, W.): I do not think that the terms of the Bill should be extended in the way suggested by the proposed clause. As the Bill is framed, the local authority may not advance more than four-fifths of the purchase price, but in all circumstances they are bound to see that the value of the house is sufficient to justify the advance. If the local authority is satisfied that they have sufficient security, why should they make it a sort of condition that a working man must insure his life in a friendly society, which may not be the very wisest thing for him to do, before he can obtain the benefit of the Act? I think we are travelling outside the scope of the Bill, and making it a sort of advertisement of the advantages of life insurance, and I hope the House will not consent to the clause.

***COL. HUGHES** (Woolwich): I object to the clause, on behalf of the working men who are, under this Bill, to be enabled to negotiate loans on cheaper terms than they can get at the present time. It would place on the working man who wanted to buy his house the burden of the premium of his policy of insurance, in addition to the burden of paying off the principal and the interest on the purchase money. It may be said that the clause is optional, but it would give the local

authorities a hint to demand this collateral security. I quite agree that without the clause the local authority may take a collateral security, but the suggestion ought not to come from us. If you put too much thrift on a man—first, the thrift of buying a house; and second, the thrift of insuring his life—he might not be able to do both at the same time, and the whole system would break down.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I think the hon. Gentleman ought to see that the clause is absolutely unnecessary, and may have a very mischievous effect. It confers no new power on the local authority, but it distinctly offers a suggestion to them that they ought to look for collateral security.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I advise my hon. friend to withdraw the clause, after the opinions which have been expressed by the right hon. the Colonial Secretary and others. I am quite sure that my hon. friend is animated by the best motives in suggesting the clause, but I think there is a great deal in what has been said, that the local authorities might make additional difficulties in granting loans owing to the suggestion of collateral security.

MR. DRAGE: After the appeal that has been made to me, I would ask to withdraw the Amendment.

Motion and clause, by leave, withdrawn.

***SIR ALFRED HICKMAN**: When this Bill was introduced last session, it was made a matter of complaint, especially by the hon. Member for Battersea, that it did not apply to London and to our very large towns. The object of the clause which I venture to propose is that it should be made applicable to London and other large towns. It is obvious that there is no reason why a number of persons should not join together to build, or acquire a row, or block of houses; and why should they not be able to obtain advances from the local authorities collectively as well as individually? The clause is only permissive, and I believe it will materially extend the usefulness of the measure. I move that the clause be read a second time.

New clause :—

"A local authority may make the like advances to two or more persons jointly to whom this Act applies, for the purpose of acquiring a row or block of dwellings in which they *bonâ fide* intend to reside; such advances to be subject to the same provisions and restrictions (as far as they apply) as if the advances were made to one person in respect of one house."—(*Sir Alfred Hickman.*)

Brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made and question proposed,
"That the clause be read a second time."

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I hope my hon. friend will not press this clause. I perfectly understand his motives, but there are very strong practical objections to his proposal. A general feeling has been expressed that it would complicate matters if local authorities were allowed to advance money on houses that are not already built or in course of erection; but there is another objection to making the loans to a number of tenants jointly, which it is quite impossible to overcome. Suppose twenty tenants asked for a loan jointly, you would require to make them into a corporation; and that would involve every one of these answerable for the other nineteen, in cases, for instance, of injury.

MR. GRAY (West Ham, North): I am bound to agree that this clause, as it stands, is objectionable; but I am exceedingly sorry that there is no provision in the Bill which would enable two persons to purchase a house already in existence. It is very common in the suburbs of large towns for two families to reside in one house, the one on the ground floor, and the other on the second floor; and the house becomes two separate tenements, with two separate entrances. In my own borough a large number of streets would be put out of the operation of the Bill, unless it is made applicable to such cases.

*SIR ALFRED HICKMAN: After what has fallen from my right hon. friend. I ask permission of the House to withdraw the Amendment.

Motion and clause, by leave, withdrawn.

Sir Alfred Hickman.

*MR. LOWLES: I move the Amendment standing in my name with every confidence that the House will accept it. I regard this Bill as one of the most important of a social character brought before the House this session. Under the Bill the maximum sum to be advanced is £240, assuming that the price of the house is £300, and that the purchaser has £60. I have taken some pains to ascertain the relative amounts of deposits in the Post Office Savings Bank—a test of the savings of the people; and I think I am right in saying that where one person has £50 or £60 in the bank, there are ten persons who have £25 or £30 at their credit. By force of reasoning, if the amount to be advanced were increased from four-fifths to nine-tenths of the value of the house, for every one person who would be benefited under the Bill as it stands, ten persons would be benefited by the alteration I propose. We have precedents for reducing the margin of security. Under the Irish Purchase Act the Land Commissioners have actually advanced to within 2½ per cent. of the value of the property. If the Irish tenant can be trusted, surely the English mechanic can be trusted also. I am told that the arrears in Ireland are exceedingly small, and experience proves that a small margin like this has not caused loss. Another reason I have for advancing this proposal is that there are a large number of land corporations who have been buying land and building houses in the suburbs, and who sell to a working man a house by instalments spread over a long period if he pays a deposit of 10 per cent. on the value of the house. If a private party can do that surely the State ought to be able to do it also. Every quarter the rate of security would be increased at the rate of 3½ per cent. per annum. These facilities have been given to the Irish tenant occupiers, and have not been abused by them. And are English artisans to be less trusted? I sincerely believe that this measure will be very largely used, and I hope we shall afford every possible facility in order that it may be brought within reach of the greatest possible number. I believe the State can afford the small risk involved in reducing the margin from one-fifth to one-tenth, and I hope the Government will accept the Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 10, to leave out the words 'four-fifths' in order to insert the words 'nine-tenths,' instead thereof."—(*Mr. Lowles.*)

Question proposed, "That the words 'four-fifths' stand part of the Bill."

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: This question as to the proportion to be advanced under the Bill was fought out in the Grand Committee.

MR. LOWLES: My particular Amendment was not discussed at all.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I am not saying anything about a particular Amendment, but the general question was before the Grand Committee.

MR. LOWLES: The Amendment in my name was by a misunderstanding not moved, and no Amendment to reduce the margin was moved, although one to increase it was.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I am not prepared to accept the view of my hon. friend. However, there are two points to consider. We wish to advance the largest possible proportion that is likely to be acceptable to the local authorities. If we suggest to a local authority or require it to advance a proportion for which in its opinion there is not sufficient security offered, then the Bill will be a dead letter in a great many localities. In my opinion one-fifth is not too much to ask for security. It is quite true that a number of working men may not have that amount, although there are means by which they can find it, but a very large number of the better class working men have, in savings banks and other investments, amounts sufficient to cover the advance required by this Bill. The whole question has been very carefully considered, and I most strongly advise the House to retain the proportion already in the Bill.

MR. HOBHOUSE (Somersetshire, E.): I certainly do not wish to re-open this question, but I wish to say a few words

on behalf of a person who has been rather left without any representative—namely, the ordinary ratepayer. We all know the philanthropic motives of the hon. Member for Haggerston; but we must remember that the local authorities run a risk under this Bill, and we have no business to make that risk too great. My hon. friend who moved the Amendment referred to the cases of the Irish farmers and the Scotch crofters, but I venture to suggest that neither of them is applicable to the question we are now discussing. This is a question of houses, and houses require repairs, especially the sort of houses to be bought under this Bill. Property is rising so rapidly in London that it may be safe enough to advance a larger proportion on it; but there are many parts of the country in which house property is falling, and in which the population is diminishing and shifting away, and in such cases the local authorities would run very considerable risk if they advanced more than four-fifths.

MR. BAINBRIDGE (Lincolnshire): I can quite understand the right hon. Gentleman regarding the interests of the working man on the one hand, and the interests of the local authority on the other. My memory confirms what the hon. Member has stated, that this Amendment was not discussed in the Grand Committee, but it was left out by a misunderstanding. I am quite sure that the security proposed in the Amendment would be safe. If we wish this Bill to be made use of, we must make the terms very much more favourable for the working classes. I hope the hon. Member will push his Amendment to a Division.

MR. BARTLEY: No private firm or prudent person would dream of going beyond the proposal in the Bill, and therefore we ought not to compel the ratepayers to do so.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 259; Noes, 67. (Division List, No. 207.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
 Allsopp, Hon. George
 Arnold, Alfred
 Arrol, Sir William
 Ashmead Bartlett, Sir Ellis
 Ashton, Thomas Gair
 Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
 Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
 Baird, John George Alexander
 Baker, Sir John
 Balcarres, Lord
 Baldwin, Alfred
 Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r
 Balfour, Rt. Hn. Gerald W. (Leeds)
 Banbury, Frederick George
 Barnes, Frederic Gorell
 Barry, Rt. Hn. A. H. S. (Hunts)
 Bartley, George C. T.
 Barton, Dunbar Plunket
 Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
 Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
 Bemrose, Sir Henry Howe
 Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
 Bhowaggee, Sir M. M.
 Biddulph, Michael
 Bill, Charles
 Billson, Alfred
 Birrell, Augustine
 Blundell, Colonel Henry
 Bolitho, Thomas Bedford
 Bond, Edward
 Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
 Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex)
 Bowles, T. G. (King's Lynn)
 Brassey, Albert
 Brookfield, A. Montagu
 Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
 Bullard, Sir Harry
 Burdett-Coutts, W.
 Burt, Thomas
 Campbell, Rt. Hn. J. A. (Glas.)
 Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
 Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derby.)
 Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, E.)
 Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
 Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Bir.)
 Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r
 Chelsea, Viscount
 Cochrane, Hon. T. H. A. E.
 Coddington, Sir William
 Coghill, Douglas Harry
 Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
 Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
 Cooke, C. W. Radcliffe (Herefd)
 Cornwallis, Fiennes S. W.
 Cotton-Jodrell, Col. E. T. D.
 Cox, Irwin Edw. Bainbridge
 Cranborne, Viscount
 Cripps, Charles Alfred
 Crombie, John William
 Cross, H. Shepherd (Bolton)
 Cubitt, Hon. Henry
 Curzon, Viscount
 Dalkeith, Earl of
 Dalrymple, Sir Charles
 Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan)
 Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
 Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
 Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
 Doughty, George
 Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
 Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)

Doxford, William Theodore
 Drage, Geoffrey
 Drucker, A.
 Dunn, Sir William
 Edwards, Owen Morgan
 Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
 Ellis, John Edward
 Evans, Sam. T. (Glamorgan)
 Fellowes, Hon. A. Edward
 Ferguson, Hon. C. Munro (Leith)
 Finch, George H.
 Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
 Firbank, Joseph Thomas
 Fisher, William Hayes
 FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose-
 Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
 FitzWygram, General Sir F.
 Flannery, Sir Fortescue
 Fletcher, Sir Henry
 Flower, Ernest
 Folkestone, Viscount
 Fry, Lewis
 Garfit, William
 Gedge, Sydney
 Gilliat, John Saunders
 Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert J.
 Goldsworthy, Major-General
 Gordon, Hon. John Edward
 Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir J. Eldon
 Goschen, Rt. Hn. G. J. (St. George's
 Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
 Goulding, Edward Alfred
 Graham, Henry Robert
 Green, W. D. (Wendesbury)
 Greville, Hon. Ronald
 Gull, Sir Cameron
 Gunter, Colonel
 Hanbury, Rt. Hn. Robt. Wm.
 Hardy, Laurence
 Hare, Thomas Leigh
 Harwood, George
 Haslett, Sir James Horner
 Hatch, Ernest Frederick G.
 Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale-
 Heath, James
 Helder, Augustus
 Hernon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
 Hill, Sir Edw. Stock (Bristol)
 Hoare, E. Brodie (Hampstead)
 Hobbouse, Henry
 Holland, Hon. Lionel R. (Bow)
 Holland, Wm. H. (York, W. R.)
 Hornby, Sir William Henry
 Howard, Joseph
 Howell, William Tudor
 Hozier, Hon. J. H. Cecil
 Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn
 Hughes, Colonel Edwin
 Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
 Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)
 Jenkins, Sir John Jones
 Jessel, Captain H. Merton
 Johnson-Ferguson, Jabez Edw.
 Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
 Joicey, Sir James
 Jolliffe, Hon. H. George
 Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir J. H.
 Kenyon, James
 Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
 Kimber, Henry
 Knowles, Lees
 Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)

Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
 Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
 Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
 Llewellyn, E. H. (Somerset)
 Llewellyn, Sir Dillwyn (Swan)
 Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
 Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
 Long, Col. C. W. (Evesham)
 Long, Rt. Hn. W. (Liverpool)
 Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
 Lorne, Marquess of
 Lowe, Francis William
 Loyd, Archie Kirkman
 Lubbock, Rt. Hon. Sir John
 Lucas-Shadwell, William
 Macdonald, John Cumming
 MacIver, David (Liverpool)
 Maclure, Sir John William
 McCrae, George
 McEwan, William
 McIver, Sir Lewis (Edinb'gh, W)
 McLaren, Charles Benjamin
 Malcolm, Ian
 Mappin, Sir Frederick T.
 Marks, Henry Hananel
 Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
 Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
 Melville, Beresford Valentine
 Middlemore, J. Throgmorton.
 Milbank, Sir Powlett C. J.
 Mildmay, Francis Bingham
 Milton, Viscount
 Milward, Colonel Victor
 Monk, Charles James
 Moore, William (Antrim, N.)
 Moore, Robert J. (Shropshire)
 Morgan, Hn. F. (Monmouthsh)
 Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford
 Mount, William George
 Murray, Rt. Hn. A. Graham (Bute)
 Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
 Newark, Viscount
 Newdigate, Francis Alexander
 Nicol, Donald Ninian
 Nussey, Thomas Willans
 Oldroyd, Mark
 O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
 Orr-Ewing, Charles Lind-say
 Palmer, Sir C. M. (Durham)
 Paulton, James Mellor
 Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington)
 Pierpoint, Robert
 Pilkington, R. (Lancs., Newton)
 Pilkington, Sir G. A. (Lancs. SW)
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Priestley, Sir W. O. (Edin.)
 Purvis, Robert
 Rankin, Sir James
 Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
 Rentoul, James Alexander
 Rickett, J. Compton
 Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir M. W.
 Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
 Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
 Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
 Robinson, Brooke
 Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
 Round, James
 Roys, Clement Molyneux
 Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
 Ryder, John Herbert Dudley
 Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)

Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Seely, Charles Hilton
Seton-Karr, Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sidebottom, T. H. (Stalybr.)
Sinclair, Capt. J. (Forfarsh.)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Spencer, Ernest
Spicer, Albert
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk)
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
Stanley, Henry M. (Lambeth)
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stewart, Sir M. J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir J. M.
Stock, James Henry

Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strachey, Edward
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David A. (Merthyr)
Thorburn, Walter
Tomlinson, Wm. E. Murray
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Usborne, Thomas
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard
Ward, Hon. Robert A. (Crewe)
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-

Whiteley, H. (Ashton-u.-L.)
Williams, John Carvell (Notts.)
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson-Todd, W. H. (Yorks.)
Woodall, William
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Hudders.)
Wyndham, George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Sir William Walrond and
Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allison, Robert Andrew
Austin, M.
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Broadhurst, Henry
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Sir Charles (Glasgow)
Cameron, Robert (Durham)
Carvill, Patrick G. Hamilton
Cawley, Frederick
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Colville, John
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Crilly, Daniel
Dalbiac, Colonel Philip Hugh
Dewar, Arthur
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Duckworth, James
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gold, Charles
Gourley, Sir Edward Temperley

Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Hazel, Walter
Hedderwick, Thomas Charles H
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Chas. H.
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Horniman, Frederick John
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Langley, Batty
Lawson, Sir W. (Cumb'land)
Leng, Sir John
Leuty, Thomas Richmond
Lough, Thomas
Macaleese, Daniel
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
M'Ghee, Richard
Murnaghan, George
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)
Perks, Robert William
Pirie, Duncan V.

Price, Robert John
Priestley, Briggs (Yorks.)
Randall, David
Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
Scott, Chas. Prestwich (Leigh)
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Stevenson, Francis S.
Stuart, James (Shoreditch)
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Wedderburn, Sir William
Weir, James Galloway
Wills, Sir William Henry
Wilson, Charles Henry (Hull)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, John (Govan)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Woods, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Mr. Lowles and Mr. Bain-
bridge.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The Bill as it was introduced provided, besides the limit of four-fifths of the value of the house, the further limit that the advance was in no case to exceed £240. It was represented in the Grand Committee, however, that it was most desirable to induce the purchase of freehold wherever possible, and that as the purchaser of freehold would necessarily add a considerable sum to the total purchase price, the advance should in such cases be increased. Accordingly, I undertook to bring forward an Amendment, which I now move, that the limit in the case of freehold should be £300.

Amendment proposed—

"In Clause 1, page 1, line 12, at end, to insert 'or in the case of a fee simple, or leasehold of not less than ninety-nine years unexpired at the date of the purchase, three hundred pounds.'—(*Mr. Secretary Chamberlain.*)

Question: "That those words be there inserted," put, and agreed to.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The Amendment which I now move is to prevent a man from obtaining advances under this Bill for two houses at the same time. We want to guard against the Bill being used in any way for house speculation.

MR. JOHN WILSON (Durham, Mid.): As a man is compelled to reside in the house he has purchased, how can he live six months in one house and six in another?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Of course residence is an essential condition for an advance under the Bill. But we consider that the Amendment is desirable.

Amendment proposed—

"In Clause 2, page 2, line 16, after 'house,' to insert, 'and is not already the proprietor with-

in the meaning of this Act of a house to which the statutory conditions apply."

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put, and agreed to.

SIR R. B. FINLAY: The Amendment which I move is intended to meet the case of a bankrupt or a man dying insolvent. In that case it is very desirable that the estate should get the benefit of any payments made in respect of the house. At the same time, this would be very difficult if it were necessary for the trustee himself to take possession and realise, for he would in that way render himself liable for all payments that yet remained to be paid. The effect of this provision is simply to provide that in the case of bankruptcy or insolvency the local authorities should take possession or sell the house, and that any balance remaining on the sale over the amount advanced should be paid to the estate.

MR. EVANS: I suppose the estate will not pass to the local authority.

SIR R. B. FINLAY: If the hon. Gentleman will look at Clause 5, he will see that wherever the local authority is entitled to take possession of a house, possession may be recovered, whatever be the value of the house, by or on behalf of the authority, as if the local authority were the landlord and the proprietor of the house were the tenant.

Amendment proposed—

"In Clause 3, page 3, line 22, at end to add: (5) In the case of the bankruptcy of the proprietor of the house, or in the case of a deceased proprietor's estate being administered in bankruptcy under Section 125 of the Bankruptcy Act, 1883, the local authority may either take possession of the house or order the sale of the house without taking possession, and shall do so except in pursuance of some arrangement to the contrary with the trustee in bankruptcy."—(*Mr. Solicitor General.*)

Question, "That those words be there inserted," put and agreed to.

Amendment proposed—

"In Clause 7, page 5, line 17, at end to add 'and where the proprietor of any such house becomes bankrupt, or his estate is administered in bankruptcy under Section 125 of the Bankruptcy Act, 1883, and in either case an arrangement under this Act is made with the

Mr. J. Chamberlain.

trustee in bankruptcy, the condition as to residence shall, if the local authority think fit, be suspended during the continuance of the arrangement.'"—(*The Solicitor-General.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

MR. WILLIAM MOORE (Antrim, W.): The Act of 1883 does not apply to Ireland. Should there not be a reference to the corresponding Irish Act of 1872?

SIR R. B. FINLAY: I will call the attention of the Law Officers to this. I think the matter can be dealt with in Clause 14.

Question put, and agreed to.

*MR. HOBHOUSE: I have a very important Amendment to move on this clause, the object of it being to substitute for the County Council, so far as that body has jurisdiction under this Bill, urban or rural district councils, including in the urban councils the council of every borough. The reason which makes the County Councils Association, who have asked me to bring forward this Amendment, desirous of having this change, is that as the Bill at present stands, the council of every urban district with a population of over 7,000 may exclude itself from the operation of the Bill, and constitute itself the local authority for the purposes of the Bill. Under a subsequent Amendment to be proposed by my hon. and gallant friend the Member for Warwickshire, every rural district council with a population of over 7,000 may do the same. I understand the Government look favourably on my hon. friend's Amendment, and therefore I think it would be well for me to put before the House the position in which the County Council would stand should the Amendment be carried. In the first place, I cannot understand the principle on which so many districts which are represented already on the County Council are allowed to exclude themselves from the jurisdiction of the Council, and to become local authorities under this Act. The only interpretation I can put upon it is that the Government and the right hon. Gentleman believe that the County Council will not work this Act properly. They have, so to say, a distrust of the County Council. If that be so, then why not go a little fur-

ther and make the district council, in whom apparently they have confidence, the authority under the Bill? Otherwise the County Council will be left with the apparent responsibility, and with power over only a very small portion of the county, with the result that in most cases the majority of the members voting on the application of the Act will represent districts which can at any time exclude themselves from the operation of the Act, and will, therefore, be in a wholly irresponsible position. I have obtained returns from one or two counties, in order to show the remarkable effect of this Bill. In the West Riding of Yorkshire there are 90 councillors. Under the Government proposal the representatives of the districts which can exclude themselves from the provisions of the Bill number 49, or more than a majority; while if the Amendment of the hon. Member for Warwick is carried, the number will be increased to 76, or more than three-fourths of the council voting on the application of the Act will have no real or direct interest. In the County of Stafford, of the 76 councillors, 45 will be irresponsible under the Government proposal, and no fewer than 65 if my hon. friend's Amendment is embodied in the Bill. In Lancashire, out of 105 councillors, the respective numbers of irresponsible councillors will be 67 and 75. I have here a very strong letter from Sir John Hibbert, the Chairman of the Lancashire County Council, whom we are sorry not to have with us in this House now. He points out that in Lancashire, under the Government proposal, a population of very nearly a million and a half—out of a total population in the county of less than two millions, will be excluded under the Government proposal, while if the Amendment of my hon. and gallant friend is carried, the County Council will only be left with control in this matter over a population of 274,000. The House will agree with my right hon. friend when he writes that this is "an absurdity as a matter of local government." Bedford, a smaller county, shows practically the same result—out of a population of 900,000, there will, if the Amendment is carried, be left only 25,000 under the jurisdiction of the County Council. It may be argued that although the districts may claim to be excluded, they will not necessarily do so; but assuredly every district council which

is anxious to put the Act into operation will claim the right to do so, if only for the pride of carrying out the work. I believe I am right in saying that in every county in England there will be an irresponsible majority of the councillors deciding on the application of the Acts to certain districts. I believe myself that if the county councils are given proper responsibility and proper powers to carry out the Act they will not be slow to put it in force, wherever there is any popular demand. No doubt the application of the Small Holdings Act was not quite so general as had been anticipated, but then that was largely due to certain adverse influences which were at work—such as the depression in the price of land. But if the demand for houses proves as extensive as it is believed in certain quarters of the House it will, I am sure no county council would wish to withstand any pressure which might be applied to put the Act in force. You are putting the county councils in an unfair position if you exclude from their area the greater part of the population. If you make the majority of the councillors irresponsible you cannot expect them to work the Act satisfactorily, and not only that, but, in future, in order to solve this difficult question of local areas there will be clauses put in many Bills giving responsibility of jurisdiction primarily to the county councils, but allowing the district councils to opt themselves out of that jurisdiction. This will strike a vital blow at the root of county government. It is because this Bill may be made a precedent that the County Councils Association think it necessary to enter this protest. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will see the true solution of this question. If he does not trust the county councils in all, let him trust them not at all, and put the power, responsibility, and jurisdiction in the hands of the district councils, and thus give them a greater inducement to carry out the Act.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 5, line 39, to leave out from the word 'any' to the end of sub-section (1) of Clause 9, in order to insert the words 'urban or rural district' instead thereof."—(*Mr. Hobhouse.*)

Question proposed, "That the words from the word 'any' to the word 'urban,' in line 40, stand part of the Bill."

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: My hon. friend appears in this matter as the defender of the rights, dignities and authorities of the county councils as against the ambition of the urban and rural districts within their jurisdiction. In dealing with this matter the Government have had to consider one or two important questions. The most important has been what is the best authority for carrying out the provisions of the Bill. It seems to me that two things are required. The authority must be one of character and experience, and able to deal with what is, after all, rather novel and responsible legislation in a creditable manner, and not be inclined or liable to waste the ratepayers' money. The authority must also be sufficiently sympathetic to the objects of the Bill, in order that the desire of the population to take advantage of the Bill may not be frustrated. In the first place the Bill proposes as authorities two great bodies—the county councils and the councils of county boroughs. They possess one of these desiderata, for their experience and business capacity ensure that, if they undertake to put the Bill into operation, it will be done in a proper and economical manner. But on further consideration it appeared to us that the county councils were being asked to undertake authority over too large districts, and that it was almost impossible for them, with their other work, to have the requisite knowledge of and interest in the rural districts. My hon. friend has adduced reasons for the failure of the Small Holdings Act, but I confess I think the most important reason is the unreadiness of county councils to deal with matters which involve the obtaining of so much local knowledge. Therefore, it is provided in the Bill that urban district councils with a population of over 7,000, wherever they desire it, shall be taken out of the county councils' area, both as to liability to taxation under the Bill and as to putting its provisions in operation. Then it is proposed by the hon. Member for Stratford-on-Avon that rural district councils shall be able to exclude themselves in the same way. By accepting that Amendment all districts with a population of over 7,000 will be provided for,

and the Amendment will introduce, as an operative authority, a most useful class of public bodies. We required a certain limit of population, and we took 7,000 as being reasonable, and calculated to secure that the authorities had had considerable experience of public business. The rural district councils will cover the rural districts on the outskirts of large towns, where, I believe, there will be the largest demand for the application of the Bill. I do not think that it is certain that all these bodies will take advantage of the opportunity to become authorities under the Bill; but the hon. Member desires that the county councils shall be relieved from responsibility altogether. That would be to leave a considerable area, not very populous, in each county, unrepresented altogether for the purposes of this Bill. Against that suggestion I must also protest, because if a labourer desires to obtain a cottage on the terms of the Bill, I think that the man should have an opportunity of representing his case to the county council. I hope that when such a case presents itself the county councils will show themselves more considerate towards the claim when made than has been the case under the Small Holdings Act. While, therefore, I am prepared to accept the Amendment of the hon. Member for Stratford-on-Avon, I am unable to accept the Amendment of the hon. Member for East Somerset.

*LORD E. FIZMAURICE: The right hon. Gentleman has announced an exceedingly important change in this Bill, a change which materially alters its provisions. I hope he will not think I am actuated by any unworthy jealousy or suspicion of urban authorities in the action I am about to take, for I may say that I support the Amendment of the hon. Member for East Somerset, because I have confidence in those authorities. I may go further than he does, because I believe that by the acceptance of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Stratford-on-Avon we shall be reducing the county councils to an absurd position, as they will be left with only a few detached rags of territory over which they can exercise jurisdiction in this matter. I believe myself that urban authorities and rural authorities are better fitted to deal with this Bill than the county councils. No doubt, in certain matters, it is better for the county

council to have the jurisdiction, but I am inclined to think that in regard to this particular question this Bill, if it conferred the primary authority on urban and district councils, with an appeal to the county council, would prove a more valuable piece of legislation. What will be the result of the change made by the right hon. Gentleman? We shall have this extraordinary state of things when the Bill passes into law; we shall have the county council exercising jurisdiction over a few detached places, and urban and district councils acting as separate authorities. This will lead to rating and other difficulties and involve no end of trouble. I think the only course open to the Government is to adopt the Amendment of my hon. friend the Member for East Somerset, and to place their trust in urban and rural councils throughout the country, allowing the county councils to retire from the field, as they are perfectly willing to do.

COLONEL MILWARD (Warwick, Stratford-on-Avon): As we are practically discussing the substance of the Amendment I have placed upon the Paper, perhaps it would be convenient if I stated the reasons which have actuated me in making this proposal. The objection I have to the Amendment of the hon. Member for East Somerset is, that it excludes county councils altogether, and inserts urban and rural councils without any limit as to their size. Now, we all acknowledge that this is an Act under which a considerable amount of public money may be spent, and it is therefore desirable that it should be administered by responsible persons. But if we admit all the urban and rural authorities, the number of small bodies entrusted with these powers will be exceedingly great. Take the case of the County of Chester. There you have twenty-two urban districts with a population of less than 7,000, many of them having a population of only 1,000 or 2,000. This is an experimental measure, and you are going to entrust large powers for borrowing and lending money on house property to these very small districts. I do not think it would be a safe thing to do. I therefore feel bound to vote against the Amendment of the hon. Member for East Somerset. The question then arises—to whom shall we entrust the primary authority for putting this Act into operation? On the one hand you have the

county council, and on the other hand you have the urban and rural districts with a population exceeding 7,000. In passing, I would point out that a rural district with a population of 7,000 has a far larger rateable value, and therefore is of far greater importance, than an urban district with the same population. I have the highest opinion of the work of the county councils, but it has been brought home very strongly to me that this not a body which can possibly administer an Act of this kind satisfactorily. When you have districts separated by fifteen, twenty, or thirty miles from the centre of the county, your trouble at once begins in a matter of this kind; for, before you are justified in lending money, it is requisite to have local knowledge of the persons to whom the money is to be advanced. The noble Lord, the Member for Wiltshire, has spoken of the difficulties that may arise in connection with finance. It is certain that if losses should occur under this Act—I do not believe that they will—it will be necessary to have a differential rate. But you have that already. Lancashire is honey-combed with non-county boroughs, and there you already have differential rates; and surely, if you have to have a differential rate for one district it is just as easy to have it for twenty. I therefore do not attach much importance to that argument of the noble Lord.

MR. DILLON: If this Amendment is accepted, and the county councils are still left in authority over those districts which cannot or will not take autonomy themselves, you will have in every county council in the country a large number of irresponsible and responsible councillors. You will have some representing autonomous districts, and others who do not. If this Bill is passed at all, the proper machinery to work it is such as that which has been employed in Ireland and Scotland for the erection of labourers' cottages—councils sufficiently small to have a personal knowledge of the district and its inhabitants. It will be exceedingly difficult for county councils to put this Bill into operation at all, and that difficulty will be enormously increased if the Amendment of the hon. Member for Stratford-on-Avon is accepted; because, to expect the county council will be able to do justice in administering this Act to the remaining few districts which will be debared from

claiming autonomy, is too much, and those districts, as a result, will be excluded from any benefit at all. There are many parts of the country of Ireland where the county councils have less knowledge of the remoter parts of their districts than they have of the Metropolis. Then, again, what would be the financial relations of the districts which remain under the jurisdiction of the county council and the districts which obtain autonomy under the Amendment?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: There will have to be a consequential Amendment.

MR. DILLON: That being so, it does not appear to me that there is much force in the contention of the noble Lord. I think there can be no doubt that the best machinery for carrying out this Act will be the district councils.

COMMANDER BETHELL (York, E.R., Holderness): Personally, I should prefer the county council to the district council. I do not think that it is at all clear that the county councils would be less sympathetic to the labourers than the district council, for county councils usually act through local committees. There is, no doubt, a great deal of misunderstanding about it, and I quite recognise the difficulty that would be felt in the matter, and that the right hon. Gentleman may not be ready to hand over all these powers to the county council. The objections to this scheme

are very great, but I suggest that it would be well to follow the precedents which are set in other Bills, giving the power to the urban and district councils, but giving a concurrent power—a power to act on appeal—to the county councils. By that means you would remove from the Bill the blot which is now upon it, of studding a county with small administrative districts, to the detriment of the dignity and weight of the county council. Personally, I think that the district council ought to go out altogether, and that the parish councils ought to come in.

*MR. BILL (Staffordshire, Leek): I think the figures taken from Staffordshire, where there is a large county borough and urban district population, show that it would be well if this power were left in the hands of small and local bodies rather than the hands of the county council. Inasmuch as under the altered

scheme now accepted by the Government, only a wretched residuum of the population would come under the purview of the County Council, so far as this Bill is concerned. I believe that that would secure greater uniformity and simplicity, and therefore I should suggest that the Amendment before the House should be accepted.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): The difficulty of the Government in this matter is that they do not like to give this authority to smaller bodies than those controlling 7,000 population; but it is suggested that that objection might be got rid of by giving an appeal under this Act from the smaller bodies to the county councils in a case where the local authorities had refused to take advantage of the Acts. There is a precedent for such a course in the Act of 1894, and if that was done it would get rid of the difficulty of accepting the Amendment which is now before the House. It has been shown conclusively that if you take out all these local authorities it will only leave a small residuum, and the county council would not be able to take advantage of the Act. All the larger areas would contract themselves out of the Act.

SIR R. B. FINLAY: The hon. Gentleman has correctly stated that there is great difficulty in the way of adopting any such proposal as that which has been made, because it is not desirable to entrust, in the first instance, at all events, the administration of this Act to very small authorities. We want an authority representing a considerable population, and with that view the limit of 7,000 has been suggested. It appears to me that it is desirable that the Act should extend to the whole country, and therefore we must provide some authority to act in those parts of the country not included in the districts that adopt the Act and which have a population of 7,000. For that purpose it is desirable that the county council should have jurisdiction, so that if there is any number of labourers who want cottages they may have some authority to which they may go, even if they do not reside in an urban or rural district with a population of 7,000. It has been suggested that there should be an appeal from the district council to the county council, but I ask the House to consider the difficulties that will arise if we allow an appeal of that kind. A man would go to the district council and

Mr. Dillon.

ask for an advance to enable him to purchase a house. If the district council refused it is suggested that he should appeal to the county council, and the county council is then supposed to hear evidence and, if they think fit, make the grant out of the county rate. So we shall have two sets of authorities working in the same district and we should have interminable proceedings. I suggest to the House that it had better adhere to the arrangement that has been suggested, and which, on the whole, avoids the greatest number of difficulties and attains the maximum of good.

MR. GRAY: I am sorry to hear the decision of the Solicitor-General that the appeal to the county authority should not be accepted. I fear the result may be that a small urban or district council may

come to the conclusion that there might be some risk attached to this Bill and would decide to become an authority under the Act for the express purpose of not putting it into operation. In a case of that sort an individual would be placed at a great disadvantage if he had not a right of appeal to the county authority, and I would still venture to press strongly the suggestion that in those cases where individuals might be precluded altogether from purchasing houses in the district where their work compelled them to live they should have an opportunity of appealing to the county authority.

Question put.

The House divided: Ayes, 240; Noes, 126 (Division List No. 208).

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir Alex. F.
Allsopp, Hon. George
Arnold, Alfred
Arrol, Sir William
Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Captain J. Fitzroy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baird, John George A.
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Man'r)
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (Leeds)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barnes, Frederic Gorell
Barry, Rt. Hn. A. H. Smith. (Hnts)
Bartley, George C. T.
Barton, Dunbar Plunket
Bathurst, Hon. Allen B.
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Begg, Ferdinand Faithfull
Bemrose, Sir Henry Howe
Bentineck, Lord Henry C.
Beresford, Lord Charles
Bhownaggee, Sir M. M.
Biddulph, Michael
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bolitho, Thomas Bedford
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn)
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, A. Montagu
Bullard, Sir Harry
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Campbell, Rt. Hn. J. A. (Glasgow)
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh.)
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, E.)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Bir.)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc.)

Chelsea, Viscount
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Ed. H. Athole
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Cooke, C. W. Radcliffe (Herefd)
Cornwallis, Fiennes S. W.
Cotton-Jodrell, Col. Ed. T. D.
Cox, Irwin Edw. Bainbridge
Cranborne, Viscount
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Curzon, Viscount
Dalbiac, Col. Philip Hugh
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Denny, Colonel
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Digby, John K. D. Wingfield
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. D.
Donkin, Richard Sim
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Doxford, William Theodore
Drage, Geoffrey
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edwd.
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Man.)
Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose-
FitzWygram, General Sir F.
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Flower, Ernest
Folkestone, Viscount
Garfit, William

Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lon)
Gibbs, Hn. Vicary (St. Albans)
Gilliat, John Saunders
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, Hon. John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Rt. Hn. G. J. (St. George's)
Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Graham, Henry Robert
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Green, W. D. (Wedgesbury)
Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Gull, Sir Cameron
Gunter, Colonel
Hall, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord George
Hanbury, Rt. Hn. Robert W.
Hardy, Laurence
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Heath, James
Helder, Augustus
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hill, Sir Edward Stock (Bristol)
Hoare, Edw. B. (Hampstead)
Hoare, Samuel (Norwich)
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Howard, Joseph
Howell, William Tudor
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn
Hughes, Colonel Edwin
Hutton, John (Yorks, N.R.)
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Jenkins, Sir John Jones
Jessel, Capt. Herbert Merton
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Jolliffe, Hon. H. George
Kemp, George

Kenyon, James
 Kenyon-Slaney, Colonel Wm.
 Keswick, William
 Kimber, Henry
 King, Sir Henry Seymour
 Knowles, Lees
 Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
 Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
 Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
 Llewellyn, Evan H. (Somerset)
 Llewellyn, Sir Dillwyn (Swansea)
 Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
 Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
 Long, Col. C. W. (Evesham)
 Long, Rt. Hon. Walter (Liverpool)
 Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
 Lorne, Marquess of
 Lowe, Francis William
 Lowles, John
 Loyd, Archie Kirkman
 Lubbock, Rt. Hon. Sir John
 Lucas-Shadwell, William
 Macdonald, John Cumming
 MacIver, David (Liverpool)
 MacLure, Sir John William
 McCrae, George
 McIver, Sir Lewis (Edin'gh, W.)
 Malcolm, Ian
 Marks, Henry Hananel
 Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
 Melville, Beresford Valentine
 Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
 Milbank, Sir Powlett Chas. Jn.
 Mildmay, Francis Bingham
 Milton, Viscount
 Milward, Colonel Victor
 Monk, Charles James
 Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants.)

Moore, William (Antrim, N.)
 More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
 Morgan, Hn. F. (Mon'mthsh.)
 Morton, Arthur H. A. (Dept'd)
 Murray, R. Hn. A. Graham (Bute)
 Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
 Newark, Viscount
 Newdigate, Francis Alexander
 Nicholson, William Graham
 Nicol, Donald Ninian
 Northcote, Hon. Sir H. Stafford
 Oldroyd, Mark
 O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
 Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
 Pease, Herbert Pike (D'r'l'g't'n)
 Pierpoint, Robert
 Pilkington, R. (Lancs. Newton)
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Priestley, Sir W. Overend (Edin.)
 Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
 Purvis, Robert
 Pym, C. Guy
 Rankin, Sir James
 Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
 Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir M. W.
 Ritchie, Rt. Hon. C. Thomson
 Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
 Robinson, Brooke
 Round, James
 Royds, Clement Molyneux
 Russell, Gen. F. S. (Ch't'nl'm)
 Russell, T. W. (Tyne)
 Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
 Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
 Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
 Savory, Sir Joseph
 Scoble, Sir Andrew Richard
 Seely, Charles Hilton

Seton-Karr, Henry
 Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
 Sidebottom, T. H. (Stalybr.)
 Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
 Spencer, Ernest
 Stanley, Hon. A. (Ormskirk)
 Stanley, Edward J. (Somerset)
 Stanley, Henry M. (Lambeth)
 Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
 Stewart, Sir Mark J. M. Taggart
 Stirling-Maxwell, Sir J. M.
 Stock, James Henry
 Stone, Sir Benjamin
 Sutherland, Sir Thomas
 Thorburn, Walter
 Thornton, Percy M.
 Tomlinson, Wm. E. Murray
 Trevelyan, Charles Philips
 Tritton, Charles Ernest
 Usborne, Thomas
 Valentia, Viscount
 Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. H.
 Ward, Hon. R. A. (Crewe)
 Warr, Augustus Frederik
 Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
 Wentworth, B. C. Vernon
 Whiteley, H. (Ashton-under-L)
 Whitmore, Charles Algernon
 Willox, Sir John Archibald
 Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh., N.)
 Wilson-Todd, W. H. (Yorks.)
 Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
 Wyndham, George
 Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy
 Younger, William
 TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
 Sir William Walrond and
 Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
 Allan, William (Gateshead)
 Allen, Wm. (Newc.-un'r-Lyme)
 Allison, Robert Andrew
 Ashton, Thomas Gair
 Asquith, Rt. Hon. H. Henry
 Austin, M.
 Baker, Sir John
 Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
 Bethell, Commander
 Billson, Alfred
 Birrell, Augustine
 Bolton, Thomas Dolling
 Broadhurst, Henry
 Burt, Thomas
 Buxton, Sydney Charles
 Caldwell, James
 Cameron, Sir Charles (Glasgow)
 Cameron, Robert (Durham)
 Causton, Richard Knight
 Cawley, Frederick
 Channing, Francis Allston
 Colville, John
 Condon, Thomas Joseph
 Crilly, Daniel
 Crombie, John William
 Dalziel, James Henry
 Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardig'n)
 Davitt, Michael
 Dewar, Arthur

Dillon, John
 Donelan, Captain A.
 Doogan, P. C.
 Duckworth, James
 Dunn, Sir William
 Edwards, Owen Morgan
 Ellis, John Edward
 Evans, S. T. (Glamorgan)
 Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
 Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
 Flynn, James Christopher
 Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
 Gladstone, Rt. Hon. H. J.
 Goddard, Daniel Ford
 Gold, Charles
 Gourley, Sir Edward Temperley
 Grey, Sir Edward (Berwick)
 Haldane, Richard Burdon
 Harwood, George
 Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale
 Hazell, Walter
 Hedderwick, Thomas C. H.
 Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
 Holland, Wm. H. (York, W.R.)
 Horniman, Frederick John
 Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
 Jacoby, James Alfred
 Johnson-Ferguson, Jabez Edw.
 Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
 Joicey, Sir James

Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)
 Kearley, Hudson, E.
 Langley, Batty
 Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumber.)
 Leng, Sir John
 Leuty, Thomas Richmond
 Lewis, John Herbert
 Logan, John William
 Lough, Thomas
 Macaleese, Daniel
 MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
 McEwan, William
 McGhee, Richard
 McKenna, Reginald
 McLaren, Charles Benjamin
 McLeod, John
 Maden, John Henry
 Mappin, Sir Frederick Thorpe
 Mendl, Sigismund Ferdinand
 Moulton, John Fletcher
 Murnaghan, George
 Norton, Capt. Cecil William
 Nussey, Thomas Willans
 O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
 O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
 O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
 O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
 Palmer, Sir Charles M. (Durham)
 Paulton, James Mellor
 Pease, J. A. (Northumb'ria'd)

Perks, Robert William
 Pickersgill, Edward Hare
 Pilkington, Sir G. A. (Lancs SW)
 Pirie, Duncan V.
 Price, Robert John
 Priestly, Briggs (Yorks)
 Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
 Randell, David
 Rickett, J. Compton
 Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
 Roberts, John H. (Denbigh)
 Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
 Scott, C. Prestwich (Leigh)

Shaw, Charles E. (Stafford)
 Sinclair, Capt. J. (Forfarshire)
 Smith, Samuel (Flint)
 Spicer, Albert
 Steadman, William Charles
 Stevenson, Francis S.
 Stuart, James (Shoreditch)
 Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
 Tennant, Harold John
 Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
 Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
 Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
 Wallace, Robert

Wedderburn, Sir William
 Weir, James Galloway
 Williams, John Carvell (Notts)
 Wills, Sir William Henry
 Wilson, Charles Henry (Hull)
 Wilson, H. J. (York, W.R.)
 Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
 Wilson, John (Govan)
 Woodall, William
 Woods, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
 Mr. Hobhouse and Mr. Bill.

It being after half-past Five of the clock, further proceeding on consideration, as amended, stood adjourned.

Bill, as amended, to be further considered upon Monday next.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 6) BILL.

Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill, as amended, to be considered To-morrow.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP L).

Sir William Houldsworth reported from the Committee on Group L of Private Bills, That the parties opposing the Oldham Corporation Bill had stated that the evidence of James Dyson, Mill Brow, Streetbridge, Royton, was essential to their case; and, it having been proved that his attendance could not be procured without the intervention of the House, he had been instructed to move that the said James Dyson do attend the said Committee on Friday, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

Ordered, That James Dyson do attend the said Committee on Group L of Private Bills on Friday, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

SOUTHAMPTON CORPORATION WATER BILL [Lords].

Reported [Preamble not proved]; Report to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE.

Fourth Report, with Minutes of Evidence and an Appendix, brought up, and read.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 253.]

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BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

CLERICAL TITHES BILL.

AGRICULTURE AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION (IRELAND) BILL.

On the motion for adjournment,

THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Sir W. WALROND, Devonshire, Tiverton): In moving the adjournment of the House I beg to give notice on behalf of the First Lord of the Treasury that to-morrow he will move the suspension of the Twelve o'clock rule so as to conclude the Debate upon the Clerical Tithes Bill.

MR. DILLON: I desire in a few words to renew my protest against the way in which Irish Members have been treated in regard to the consideration of the Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Bill. It is a Bill of some importance, of 35 clauses, and of great complexity. We have been kept waiting here three or four days in expectation of that Bill coming on, and as I understand now, it is not the intention of those who control this matter to give us any intimation of when it will come before the House, but to keep this Bill upon the Orders, not in the first or second place, but farther back in the Orders, that they may be able to snap a Second Reading at any moment when it is convenient and when Irish Members may not be present. I am within the limits of accuracy when I say that no considerable body of Members of this House have ever before been treated in this way with regard to a Bill in which they were interested. The Bill was mentioned in the Queen's Speech, and it has

always been the invariable custom of the Government to give notice under such circumstances as to when that Bill will be taken. To us that notice has been refused. When I complained to the First Lord of the Treasury he professed that he was very anxious to see the Bill passed, but would not give us any promise. I consider that the Irish Members in this matter have been treated with great contempt, and I shall take every opportunity of protesting against the course which has been pursued.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I desire to support the protest of the hon. Member for Mayo. This is a measure which is mentioned in the Queen's Speech, and it is not fair on the part of the Government to displace this Bill for the purpose of bringing in the Clergy Tithe Bill, which gets first place in the Orders. But I suppose we may protest and protest and continue to protest, but it will be all the same so far as the Government is concerned.

*MR. HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.): I merely rise to join in this protest as an Irish Member. I think it is very hard that some intimation should not be given to us as to when this Bill will come on. Irish constituencies naturally expect that Members should be present on a discussion of a measure of so much importance to Ireland, and the least that the Irish Members can expect from a Unionist Parliament is that the business of this House should be conducted in such a manner as

to give them an opportunity of being present when such Bills as this are brought forward. This Bill is a most important Bill, and contains 35 clauses, every one of which will admit of more or less discussion. It deals with extensive interests in Ireland, and large sums of public money, and it should have full and adequate discussion. It is not a Bill on which the Leader of the House when he throws it upon the table, ought to say "There it is, and if you do not like it you can leave it."

*MR. JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): I think a very unfair attack has been made on the First Lord of the Treasury, and it is very unfortunate that it should have been made. The First Lord of the Treasury has declared that he is anxious to pass this Bill, and we all know of the great anxiety of the Chief Secretary for Ireland and the Irish Attorney-General to secure this. A great number of Members are desirous of seeing it passed into law, and I do not think that the attack which has been made upon the First Lord is either right or proper.

MR. DILLON: May we ask when this Bill will be taken?

SIR W. WALROND: Perhaps it would be better to ask the question of the First Lord to-morrow.

House adjourned at ten minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 29th June 1899.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

TAFF VALE RAILWAY BILL.

WOKING WATER AND GAS BILL.

Committee to meet To-morrow.

NORTH-WEST LONDON RAILWAY BILL.

Re-committed: The Committee to meet To-morrow.

BOOTLE CORPORATION BILL.

The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn: The Order made on the 15th instant discharged; and Bill committed.

SCUNTHORPE URBAN DISTRICT GAS AND WATER BILL.

Reported from the Select Committee with Amendments.

CORK CORPORATION (FINANCE) BILL.

Reported without Amendment.

PORTSMOUTH CORPORATION BILL [Lords].

Reported with Amendments.

BLACKPOOL IMPROVEMENT BILL.

Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, no parties having appeared in opposition thereto; read, and ordered to lie on the Table: The Orders made on the 23rd instant and Monday last discharged; and Bill committed.

SOUTH-EASTERN AND LONDON, CHATHAM, AND DOVER RAILWAY COMPANIES (NEW LINES) BILL.

Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, no parties having appeared in opposition thereto; read, and ordered to lie on the

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Table: The orders made on the 13th instant and Monday last discharged; and Bill committed.

EAST LONDON WATER BILL.

Report from the Select Committee That it is not expedient to proceed further with the Bill; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

MIDLAND RAILWAY BILL.

The Queen's consent signified; and Bill reported from the Select Committee with Amendments.

LEITH HARBOUR AND DOCKS BILL.

The Queen's consent signified; and Bill reported from the Select Committee with Amendments.

FYLDE WATER BOARD BILL [Lords].

Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

KENSINGTON AND NOTTING HILL ELECTRIC LIGHTING BILL.

BARRY RAILWAY BILL.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY (NEW RAILWAYS) BILL.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY (VARIOUS POWERS) BILL.

Read 3^a, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

GROSVENOR CHAPEL (LONDON) BILL [Lords].

HAMPSTEAD CHURCH (EMMANUEL, WEST END) BILL [Lords].

Returned from the Commons agreed to.

BRYNMAWR AND WESTERN VALLEYS RAILWAYS BILL.

Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to.

BARTON-ON-SEA WATER BILL [Lords].

LANARKSHIRE (MIDDLE WARD DISTRICT) WATER BILL [Lords].

Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments: The said Amendments considered, and agreed to.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL
ORDERS (GAS) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL
ORDERS (No. 2) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL
ORDERS (No. 7) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL
ORDERS (No. 9) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL
ORDERS (No. 11) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PRO-
VISIONAL ORDERS (HOUSING OF
THE WORKING CLASSES) (No. 2)
BILL.

Committed to a Committee of the
whole House.

PIER AND HARBOUR PROVISIONAL
ORDERS (No. 2) BILL.

Committed: The Committee to be
proposed by the Committee of Selec-
tion.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL
ORDERS (No. 16) BILL.

Committed to a Committee of the
whole House To-morrow.

MILITARY LANDS PROVISIONAL
ORDER BILL.

Committed to a Committee of the
whole House.

WALKER AND WALLSEND UNION
GAS (ELECTRIC LIGHTING) BILL.

Committed.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL
ORDERS (No. 7) BILL.

House to be in Committee To-morrow.

GAS ORDERS CONFIRMATION (No. 2)
BILL [Lords].

House in Committee (according to
Order); the Amendments proposed by
the Select Committee made; further
Amendments made; Standing Committee
negatived; the Report of Amendments
to be received To-morrow.

TRAMWAYS ORDERS CONFIRMATION
(No. 2) BILL [Lords].

TRAMWAYS ORDERS CONFIRMATION
(No. 3) BILL [Lords].

Amendments reported (according to
Order), and Bills to be read 3^a To-morrow.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL
ORDERS (No. 18) BILL.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL
ORDERS (No. 19) BILL.

PIER AND HARBOUR PROVISIONAL
ORDERS (No. 1) BILL.

Read 3^a (according to Order), and
passed.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL
ORDERS (No. 6) BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1^a;
to be printed; and referred to the
Examiners. (No. 149.)

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

TUBERCULOSIS.

Report of the Right Honourable Sir
Herbert Maxwell, Baronet, M.P., F.R.S.,
and P. H. Pye-Smith, Esquire, M.D.,
F.R.S., the delegates of Her Majesty's
Government at the International Congress
on Tuberculosis held at Berlin on the 24th
to the 27th May, 1899.

TRADE REPORTS.

I. Annual Series :

No. 2296. Morocco (Tangier and
District).

No. 2297. Japan (Hakodate).

No. 2298. Peru.

No. 2299. Norway.

No. 2300. France (New Cale-
donia).

No. 2301. Denmark.

II. Miscellaneous Series :

No. 506. Turin Exhibition of
1898.

MINT.

Twenty-ninth Annual Report of the
Deputy-Master for 1898.

CEYLON.

Correspondence relating to recent land
legislation in Ceylon.

INDIA (RAILWAYS).

Administration Report on the Railways
in India for 1898-99.

Presented (by Command), and ordered
to lie on the Table.

LUNACY.

Fifty-third Report of the Commissioners in Lunacy to the Lord Chancellor.

INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION BOARD
(IRELAND).

Rules and programme of examinations for 1900.

PUBLIC RECORDS (WAR DEPARTMENT).

Fifth Schedule, containing a list and particulars of classes of documents which have been removed from the office of Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the War Department, and deposited in the Public Record Office, but which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation therein.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

PETITION.

MUNICIPAL CORPORATIONS
(BOROUGH FUNDS) ACT, 1872.

Petition for amendment of; of the Urban District Council of Mytholmroyd, in the County of York.

Read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL
ORDER (No. 3) BILL.

THIRD READING.

Order of the day for the Third Reading read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 3^d."—(*The Earl of Dudley*.)

THE EARL OF CRAWFORD: My Lords, I do not wish to stand in the way of the Third Reading of this Bill, but before it passes into law I should like to call attention to what I regard as the very serious principle which the Bill involves. Your Lordships may recollect that in the year 1882, when the Act was passed, a very short time was allowed before the purchase clause came into existence under which the local authority could take over the property of the under-

takers. As a result, no one could be found to put money into the electric lighting industry. In 1888, however, the period in the purchase clause was extended to forty-two years. As a result of this security, a large quantity of capital was put into the electric lighting industry, not only in London, but throughout the kingdom. After that Bill had passed your Lordships' House it went back to the House of Commons, where certain words were proposed to be inserted on the motion of Sir George Campbell. The insertion of the words was opposed by Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, who was then President of the Board of Trade, and also by the ex-President, the late Mr. Mundella. Without any further discussion the House adjourned, and when the House again had the matter before it the words were inserted without any discussion whatever. The words provided that, notwithstanding any existing Provisional Order, another Provisional Order or licence might be granted in the area to which the Bill referred. After the Bill had received the Royal assent, the Board of Trade instituted a public inquiry as to the best method of carrying out its provisions. The inquiry, which lasted, I think, eighteen days, was held at Westminster by Major Marindin, whose report resulted in the laying down of the principle by the Board of Trade that certain areas should be allotted to each undertaker, that there should be two undertakers to an area—this implied a limited competition—and that the current supplied to the consumers in that area should be varied—that is to say, one should be the alternating system, and the other the direct system. It was also laid down that, in the event of the local authority of the parish or area desiring to undertake the work itself, it should receive preference at the hands of the Board of Trade; and since that time, when a local authority has once started the supply in an area, no private company has been allowed to compete with it. During the whole of the inquiry it was never understood by the engineers or promoters of companies, or by those who were financially interested in them, that at any time a local authority would be allowed to compete against the existing company. Until the present time this has never been allowed. I have always considered competition a desirable thing; it keeps

down the price, and obviates, to a certain extent, what are considered to be the evils in relation to the gas and water supplies of London. But I maintain, and I am supported by all interested in electric lighting in the contention, that it has not been hitherto contemplated, where a local authority is put in the position that it can, if it desires, purchase the undertaking of the company supplying its district at the end of forty-two years, that the local authority should obtain an order to supply the district, and in that way depreciate the property which it might purchase at a later date. I feel that I am not expressing myself very well, but it is extremely difficult to put a matter of this kind clearly before your Lordships. I do not object to competition upon an equal basis, but I do not regard, and I am borne out by the experience of others, the competition of a local authority as fair competition. I will explain why it is not fair competition. First of all, it is easy for a local authority to get capital cheaply on the security of the rates; secondly, it has a long period in which it can make a sinking fund; and, thirdly, it has no dividends to pay to shareholders. As to the technical part of the question, the local authority is not compelled to give notices in the same way as a company. When an electric lighting company desires to supply light to a house, it has to give no less than thirteen different notices, and these notices extend over a period of thirty days. The local authority only has to give notice when it proposes to disturb the mains of a gas or water company. Immediately it receives an order, the local authority can instruct its men to connect the house at once, whereas the rival company would not be able to do this within thirty days. Again, there is nothing to prevent a local authority from selling the current at cost price, or even below cost price. They can by that means reduce the price charged to the consumer to such an extent that the company could not exist, as the whole of the customers would naturally desert the company in order to take the cheaper supply. I have very great doubts in my own mind whether this is not the line of conduct which will be adopted in the present case under this Bill, because the local authority refused to accept a clause binding them not to supply current below cost price. The local authority also refused to pur-

chase the undertaking of the company at a price regulated by the amount of expenditure that had been incurred by the company. I cannot help thinking that, if this Provisional Order is allowed to pass without a serious protest, it will be followed to a large extent by other local authorities, who will apply for Provisional Orders to supply districts in which companies have already spent a large sum of money and have commenced working, and in that way defeat the clause which provides for purchase at the end of 42 years. Therefore, I would venture to ask the Board of Trade to say what I fear they cannot say—namely, that they will not make a precedent of the principle contained in this order, but will obtain an instruction from Parliament in another year as to how they should act, in order to prevent the grievous injustice which will arise from the passing of Provisional Orders of this kind.

*THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (The EARL OF DUDLEY): My Lords, if I may say so without disrespect, there is probably no member of your lordships' House who is better qualified to give an opinion upon a matter of this kind than the noble Earl who has just addressed you. I have listened with the greatest attention to the arguments put forward, but I am bound to say that I think the procedure he has adopted in making this protest on the Third Reading of the Bill is a little unusual, and also a little inconvenient. The Bill has already passed through the House of Commons in two sessions, and when it came before the Committee of this House the opposition of the company in which the noble Earl is interested was withdrawn, but a protest is now raised at the eleventh hour. Of course, I do not deny the right of the noble Earl to take that course, but I think it is a little different to the general principle under which Private Bill Legislation in this House is conducted. My noble friend seems to think that this Bill contemplates a serious change in the policy which has governed the granting of Provisional Orders for electric lighting, and that there is no precedent for a local authority being granted an order to supply electric light in a district where a company is already supplying it. There is a precedent in the case of Newington, and I believe the company in which the

noble Earl is interested was there supplying electric light. It is true that no opposition was offered on that occasion, but still the precedent is the same. The Vestry in that case was, as proposed here, given the power to compete with a private company. My noble friend also seems to think that the Board of Trade have in some way introduced a new principle into this Bill by giving this power to the Vestry, but I would remind the House that in 1888 an Act was passed which distinctly authorises the Board of Trade to grant such power, and with the permission of the House I will just read the last words of the section :

“The granting of authority to any undertakers to supply electricity within any area, whether granted by licence or by means of a Provisional Order, shall not in any case hinder or restrict the granting of a licence or Provisional Order to the local authority, or to any other company or person within the same area.”

Those words clearly contemplate not only competition in different districts, but competition by a local authority. My noble friend seems to think that the danger of giving such a power to a local authority is that there is no security that they will supply electricity at cost price, and he said, I think, that they would not be under the same obligation as a company to make a profit. I cannot help thinking, however, that the ratepayers of a certain district would protest very strongly if their local authority contemplated supplying electricity at the cost of the rates, the effect of which would be that the general ratepayer would have to pay for the electricity used by a certain few. I do not believe a case has ever arisen in which a local authority has attempted to take such a course as that feared by my noble friend. The noble Earl also thinks that this Bill will be made a precedent, and that other local authorities will step in and apply for orders. The granting of Provisional Orders under such conditions must, of course, depend upon the circumstances of each case. What the Board of Trade has to remember, first of all, is that it has been undoubtedly laid down that competition is a good thing, and that, if the existing company is not performing its work thoroughly and well, the Board of Trade should grant an Order to a competing company so that a supply should be assured. Therefore, if in the future a

local authority promotes a Provisional Order asking for power to supply electricity in a district in which the supply is already sufficient, that fact will, of course, weigh very materially with the Board of Trade, but in the case we are now discussing this was not so. The noble Earl will, I think, hardly deny that serious allegations were made before the Committee of the House of Commons against the company with which he is connected. I believe it was stated that, although his company had been in possession of their Order for nine years, none of the mains had been laid in any of the streets comprised in the compulsory area, notwithstanding the fact that by the Order the company were under the obligation to lay the mains in the compulsory area within the space of two years. A case of that kind would, at any rate, afford a strong reason for supposing that competition was desirable and justifiable. It has been proved in other districts that, before the inhabitants will use electricity to a very great extent, facilities must be given, and its utility must be demonstrated in an easy and tangible way. You cannot expect people to ask to be supplied with electricity unless the lamps in their streets and some of the shops are lighted by electricity, so that they may see the advantage of the light. Therefore, I think that on all grounds the Board of Trade have been perfectly justified, in view of the Act, and in view of the inquiry which Sir Francis Marindin made, in granting the Order in this case. To safeguard themselves the Board of Trade embodied this Order with another one—that of Marylebone—in a separate Bill, in order that Parliament might have every opportunity of considering these Bills, which are practically on all fours, and of deciding whether they would accept the principle or not. The House of Commons threw out the Marylebone Order, but on two occasions endorsed the Bermondsey Order, and, this being so, I think it would be a very strong step for your Lordships' House to take at this stage to throw it out.

THE EARL OF CRAWFORD: I do not ask the House to throw out the Bill.

*THE EARL OF DUDLEY: I think the fact that the House of Commons has twice accepted the Bill is sufficient proof

that the noble Lord need not fear that by it any dangerous precedent will be set up.

On Question, agreed to.

Bill read 3^a accordingly, and passed.

SUMMARY JURISDICTION ACT (1879) AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

*LORD PENRHYN: My Lords, the object of this Bill, which has come up to your Lordships from the House of Commons, where it met with no opposition at all, is to include the offence of obtaining money, etc., by false pretences in the Summary Jurisdiction Act, 1879, so as to enable trifling cases, with the consent of the accused, to be dealt with summarily, as may at present be done in trifling cases of larcency. As the law now stands, magistrates are obliged to send small cases of false pretences for trial at quarter sessions, and the persons charged are sometimes kept a long time awaiting trial. In Carnarvonshire, not long ago, a man was charged with obtaining less than 2s. worth of beer by false pretences. He was committed for trial on 26th July, and was in gaol awaiting his trial until 20th October following, when he was immediately acquitted. This, I think, illustrates the hardship that may sometimes be inflicted.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2a."

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: So far as I can tell, this is a very desirable Bill, but I cannot help remarking that there was great difficulty in hearing what the noble Lord said, owing to the position he took up.

*LORD PENRHYN: This is the first time I have attempted to introduce a Bill in your Lordships' House, and I hope I may be forgiven if I did not speak as clearly and as well as I ought to have done.

LORD BELPER: My Lords, I can say, on behalf of the Home Secretary, that this has his entire approval. It seems only reasonable, where very small sums are

The Earl of Dudley.

involved, that, with the consent of the person accused, the magistrates should be able to deal with the case summarily; but it is very desirable to guard against the possibility of justices allowing charges for false pretences to be used for the purpose of enforcing mere debts. On behalf of the Home Secretary, I shall have to move an Amendment in Committee, providing that the accused shall be informed by the magistrates what, in law, false pretences are, so that there may be no chance of his pleading guilty to a charge on which he is not liable to be convicted.

On Question, agreed to.

Bill, read 2^a (according to Order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next.

POOR LAW ACTS AMENDMENT BILL [Lords.]

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

*LORD HARRIS: My Lords, several causes have contributed to induce the Local Government Board to introduce this Bill. The Departmental Committee on Poor Law Schools urged the Government to give Guardians of the Poor larger powers over children supported out of the rates than they possessed under the Act of 1889, and a Bill to that effect has been twice introduced into the House of Commons by Mr. Flower. That Bill has been supported by communications to the Local Government Board from over 200 Boards of Guardians, but as the Bill is not making progress, the Local Government Board have thought it wise to introduce a Bill themselves in your Lordships' House. The Act of 1889 gave guardians power, where a child was maintained out of the rates and had been deserted by its parent, to retain the child under their control until sixteen years of age in the case of a boy, and eighteen years of age in the case of a girl. Where, too, a parent had been imprisoned for some offence, such as cruelty to a child, the child might be taken under the control of the guardians. The Bill which I am now asking your Lordships

to read a second time enlarges those powers, and enables guardians to take charge of a child in cases where they are of opinion that by reason of mental deficiency, habits, or mode of life, the parent is unfit to have the control of it, and in cases where a parent has been sentenced to imprisonment in respect of any offence against any of his or her children. Under the Act of 1889, guardians could only take control of the child whose parent was suffering imprisonment for cruelty in respect of that child, but under this Bill the guardians will be able to take charge of any of the children of such a parent, and of the children of a parent who is permanently bedridden or disabled, or is the inmate of a workhouse, and consents to the guardians having control. They may also take charge of a child whose parents, or, in the case of an illegitimate child, the mother of the child, are or is dead. These are the alterations in the Act of 1889 which this Bill proposes. Your Lordships will understand that it applies only to those children who are being supported out of the rates, and that the guardians may at any time rescind the resolution if they think it will be for the benefit of the child that it should be so rescinded. A court of summary jurisdiction, if satisfied, on complaint made by a parent, or, if there is no parent, by a guardian of a child, that there was no ground for the resolution, has also power to determine the resolution. As I have already informed your Lordships, the Act of 1889 applies to boys up to the age of sixteen, and girls up to the age of eighteen. Clause 2 of this Bill will make it apply to children of both sexes up to the age of eighteen, and, if the children consent themselves, within three months of arriving at the age of eighteen, they may be kept under the control of the guardians up till the age of twenty-one. Clause 3 provides a penalty in cases where persons endeavour to tempt children away from the control of the guardians. The object of that clause is to prevent undesirable relatives, who are not fit to have the control of children, from endeavouring to tempt children away. In Clause 4, which relates to rather a different subject, power is given to the guardians to visit those young persons for whom they have obtained situations as servants, and whom they have apprenticed, wherever they

may be, up to the age assigned. Under the present Act they can only visit the children if they are still in the situation that was first found for them. Under this Bill they can be visited so long as they are within the union, or within a short distance of the union, whether they are in the place of first service or not. Clause 5 provides that Section 4 of the Pauper Inmates Discharge and Regulation Act, 1871, shall be amended by increasing the power of guardians to call for a longer notice of discharge where a pauper is constantly in the habit of discharging himself without sufficient reason from the workhouse. Under the present Act, where a pauper has discharged himself from a workhouse twice within a month, he has to give 72 hours' notice when he desires his discharge. The Bill proposes that where a pauper discharges himself more frequently without sufficient reason the guardians may call for a still longer notice—namely, 168 hours. In such a case it will be necessary for a direction to be entered in the minutes specifying the name of the pauper to whom it applies. These are the provisions of the Bill. They have been strongly supported by various bodies, including a large number of boards of guardians, and I trust that, under the circumstances, your Lordships will give it a Second Reading.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^d."

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: My Lords, I have no reason to say anything against the principle on which this Bill is founded, but I think some of its provisions will require careful consideration in Committee. I may not understand the Bill correctly, but it appears that its provisions are to take effect when one parent has misbehaved. The husband may have run away and deserted a child, but the mother may remain and be perfectly fit to take care of it. I certainly think the Bill will have to be scrutinised hereafter, probably in the Standing Committee, but the general object is an excellent one. I feel very great doubt as to Clause 4. This clause provides that, when a young person has been placed out in service from a workhouse, the visits to that young person which the guardians may make shall not only continue during the time that the young person is in the

service to which he or she was first sent, but shall continue afterwards when the child shall have gone to another situation.

LORD HARRIS: Within the union.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: Of course. It seems to me that if there is one thing more desirable than another it is to remove, as soon as possible, from children who have gone out into the world all recollection of their having been paupers. I think this provision in the Bill is open to considerable objection. If a child goes back to the guardians and is again placed out by them, it is perfectly reasonable that they should continue to visit, if they think it necessary; but if a young person has obtained another situation without the intervention of the guardians, and has thereby become disconnected with Poor Law administration, it is not to the advantage of the child that it should continue to be visited by the guardians. Nothing has a more deleterious effect upon a child than to ticket it as a pauper, and I think this clause of the Bill will require very careful consideration in Committee.

*THE LORD BISHOP OF WINCHESTER: My Lords, I rise to support the Second Reading of this Bill, which appears to me to be more important and more far-reaching in its beneficial consequences than perhaps may be suggested by its title or by a hurried perusal of its contents. The fact that we have five Bills under our consideration in one week, three of them in charge of members of the Government, dealing with questions affecting the education of the young is not without significance as showing the interest which is at present being taken in exceptional educational problems, and I am quite sure that in no one of the matters with which these Bills deal is legislation more urgently required, though perhaps the circle within which it is to work is small, than in the cases to which the present Bill refers. Anyone who is familiar either with the administration of the Poor Law as regards children going out from workhouses into the world, or with the management of institutions, unconnected with the Poor Law, which exist for kindred objects, will know how real is the need which this Bill is intended to meet. I, for one, desire to express my gratitude to Her Majesty's

The Earl of Kimberley.

Government for having taken in hand a measure which has been struggling for several years ineffectually to obtain a hearing in the House of Commons, and which I hope will now rapidly become law. It is impossible to exaggerate the distressing character of the cases which occasionally come before those who have taken charge, as far as they can, of children during this particular period in their lives. In a number of cases, children who have been taken away from evil homes and looked after until they arrive at the age when they are old enough to earn something for themselves, have been at the first moment taken back by their relations to those homes where everything that has been learned is unlearned. If the peril is great in the case of boys, it is ten times greater and more terrible in the case of illegitimate girls of fifteen or sixteen, who are taken back under the control of a mother who is far from having their true welfare at heart. This Bill will give wider powers to Poor Law authorities as to children whom they are able to protect, and will prolong the protection which is thus given. At present, as the noble Earl stated, desertion by the parent is a necessary preliminary to the child being taken by the guardians; but under this Bill, whether the parent has deserted the child or not, if the guardians are of opinion that the child is unfit keeping they will be able to take it away. A parent who is unfit either owing to mental deficiency or evil habits of life may now be relieved, if I may use the word, of the responsibility of taking care of the child, and the guardians may undertake that duty, charging the cost to the parent, the understanding being that this refers only to children who are under the Poor Law. All legislation of this kind is subject to two dangers. Either that we may be sentimentally relieving very poor parents of a control which we ought rather to help them themselves to exercise, or, on the other hand, our sympathy for children in an unhappy home may lead us to interfere illegitimately with the rights of control which parents ought to have. It seems to me that the Bill safeguards us from any probable difficulty under both these heads. In the first place, if such parent considers he or she is unjustly treated by the child being taken away, the parent will have the right of appeal to the court, who will decide

whether the guardians have been justified or not in the action they have taken. I think the force of public opinion is at present so strong with regard to the rights of parents that even in the case of parents other than those whom we should desire to see in charge of children, we need not fear that their interests or rights will be unduly interfered with. No provision in the Bill is more important than that which extends the age during which the protection of the guardians may last. At present girls become free from the control of the guardians on reaching the age of eighteen, and boys on reaching the age of sixteen; but under this Bill both sets of children will be under the control of the guardians till the age of eighteen, and if, three months before that, when they are perfectly able to judge for themselves, they desire to remain for three years longer under the protection of the authority which has taken charge of them hitherto, they will be able to do so. The Bill, which is drawn on eminently practical and wise lines, does not yield merely to a sentimental cry, but meets a real need, and I trust your Lordships will give it a Second Reading.

On question, agreed to.

Bill read 2^a accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House.

MANCHESTER CANONRIES BILL [Lords].

Read 3^a (according to Order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

YOUTHFUL OFFENDERS BILL [Lords].

COMMITTEES.

House in Committee (according to Order).

Clauses 1 to 5 agreed to.

Clause 6 :—

LORD NORTON: My Lords, I wish to draw attention again to this clause, which is one of those provisions by reference, which is abominably unintelligible without having the Act to which it refers before your Lordships. The House is called upon to pass this clause in the dark.

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: I apologise for interrupting the noble Lord, but I have thought his suggestion a good one, and have prepared an Amendment, setting out in exact terms the effect of this clause.

LORD NORTON: Under those circumstances, my Lords, I shall not make any further objections at this stage.

Clauses 6 to 19 agreed to.

Bill reported without Amendment, and recommitted to the Standing Committee.

FINE OR IMPRISONMENT (SCOTLAND AND IRELAND) BILL.

Read 3^a (according to Order), and passed.

QUESTIONS.

ESTATE DUTY ASSESSMENT.

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (The Earl of MORLEY): My Lords, I beg to ask H.M. Government whether, in assessing the value for estate duty of property sold after the death of a testator, the Treasury is justified in refusing to deduct the costs of the sale from the purchase-money. This question is one of no very large or important nature, and it in no way affects the principle of the Finance Act of 1894. It merely affects in one particular point the method of administration of that Act. As the House is aware, on a succession being created the property of the deceased person is valued, and the value reckoned according to the Act, which says:

"The value of any property shall be estimated at the price which, in the opinion of the Commissioners, such property would fetch in the open market if sold at the time of the death of the deceased."

The valuation having been made, and, we will assume, the duty having been paid on that valuation, it may happen that the successor may sell some of the property. In a case of that kind the Commissioners of Inland Revenue, if the purchase money of the property is in excess of the valuation, claim to be entitled to receive estate duty on the excess. I assume that, on this principle, if the purchase money was less than the valuation, the successor

would be entitled to a reduction on the amount paid. The ways of the Inland Revenue, however, are rather remarkable, and I am afraid an applicant would not have much chance of obtaining a reduction. I think, parenthetically, it is a question whether there should not be some time limit after which further claims should not be made; but my point is that the value of the property sold is clearly the price it fetches, less the costs of the sale. In all transactions of life that principle is, or ought to be, acknowledged, but the Commissioners of Inland Revenue or the Treasury refuse, in estimating the value of the purchase money for the purpose of paying estate duty, to deduct the reasonable costs of sale. This action is, in my opinion, unjust and inequitable. The case is stronger in regard to works of art and matters of that kind. We will assume that a not very remarkable collection of works of art is lying in a country house. The value of a collection in that particular place would be probably less than the valuation on which the duty has been paid, but if the works are brought to London and sold they would probably fetch a much larger price. On paying duty on that larger sum it is only fair that the successor should be allowed to deduct from the purchase money the cost of the commission in respect of the sale, which would probably be 10 or 12½ per cent., and also the cost of conveyance to London. It seems to me that this is so obviously a fair and equitable claim that it can hardly be resisted, and I trust that the noble Lord who will answer for the Treasury will give us some hope that the practice which at present prevails will be altered, or, at any rate, that the question may be considered by the Committee, which I understand the Chancellor of the Exchequer said would sit in the autumn, to deal with questions arising in reference to the Finance Act. I think the scope of that Committee might be somewhat enlarged to enable them to consider the point to which I have called the attention of the House to-night, and which deals not with the principle of the Act, but with the mode of administration. In almost all cases the amount of duty claimed under this practice would be so extremely small as not to be worth anyone's while to protest against it. The Inland Revenue Commissioners, as we all know who have dealings with them, have a keen sense of the duty resting upon

them to extract every penny they can for the revenue of their country, and the attempt of any individual to protest against the injustice to which I have referred would be absolutely futile, and would never be undertaken. Therefore the only way of bringing a small matter of this kind before the public is to call attention to it in your Lordships' House.

***THE LORD PRIVY SEAL (Viscount CROSS):** My Lords, it is not for me to say what the law should be, but simply to say what the law actually is, and the answer to my noble friend's question as to whether the Treasury is justified in refusing to deduct the costs of the sale from the purchase money seems to me to be in the affirmative. The estate duty is imposed upon principal value of all property which passes on death (Section 1, Finance Act, 1894), and the "principal value" is to be estimated to be the price which in the opinion of the Commissioners such property would fetch if sold in the open market at the time of the death of the deceased"—Section 7 (5). There is a special rule laid down for valuing agricultural property—see the proviso to Section 7 (5)—but that proviso contains no provision for allowing the costs of sale. The analogy of the probate duty was preserved as far as possible in the new estate duty. Under probate duty law the grant and the stamp duty on the grant covered the gross assets of the deceased, and no costs of administration or realisation of any kind were ever allowed against probate duty. The idea seems to be that as the property exists at the moment of death so the estate duty falls upon it with only those deductions which are expressly authorised by the Act. No deduction of costs of sale is expressly authorised by the Finance Act, 1894, except in Section 7 (3), which runs as follows:

"Where the Commissioners are satisfied that any additional expense in administering or in realising property has been incurred by reason of the property being situate out of the United Kingdom, they may make an allowance from the value of the property, on account of such expense, not exceeding in any case 5 per cent. on the value of the property."

It may therefore be inferred that, except in the particular case referred to in Section 7 (3), no such deduction was intended. Consequently, as no such deductions were made against probate duty, and the

The Earl of Morley.

Finance Act, 1894, contains no express enactment enabling such deductions to be allowed, they are invariably refused.

CEYLON—CONDUCT OF MR.
RAMANATHAN.

LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY : My Lords, I desire to ask the Under Secretary for the Colonies whether the Ceylon Government has dismissed Mr. Ramanathan from the office of Solicitor-General, or has ordered the prosecution for libel of the newspaper which accused him of fraud. In March last I suggested to Her Majesty's Government that it was incumbent upon the Ceylon Government either to dismiss Mr. Ramanathan or prosecute the newspaper which had accused him of fraud. No Government which respects itself can allow an officer holding so high a position as that of Solicitor-General to be accused of fraud. It will not be a sufficient answer for the noble Earl to say that the newspaper was an insignificant one, and was not worth notice, because the Ceylon Government, through its Attorney-General, prosecuted the same paper a short time ago on account of libelling the daughters of a police court clerk at Galle. The Indian Government either prosecutes, or orders its officials to prosecute, and pays the costs, in one case I know of, where the official lost the suit. In the case of Mr. Ramanathan there is an accumulation of offences. Since March last he has published a book which he might have dedicated to the Secretary of State, but which, if it had been dedicated to the Under Secretary, would have been a gross insult. It is entitled "A Commentary on St. Matthew." The *Madras Standard* calls it a Travesty of St. Matthew. Mr. Ramanathan speaks of Christ as a Yogi—he probably used the word in its spiritual sense only, which means a person who seeks Yoga, or communion with the Deity. But as a Hindu he ought to have known that a Yogi is a person who goes about with hardly any clothes, with his hair matted down his back, and his body covered with ashes. Anglo-Indians who have seen them would think this term highly disrespectful to Christ, and I think, as a matter of taste only, it is not fitting that a Solicitor-General of a Christian Government should, whilst in office, write a book of that kind. I cannot conceive how the noble Earl the Under Secretary can refrain from either insisting upon Mr.

Ramanathan's dismissal, or else parting company from the Colonial Office.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (The Earl of SELBORNE) : My Lords, the Secretary of State has received no information from the Acting Governor of Ceylon respecting Mr. Ramanathan of the nature indicated, and that gentleman could not in any case be dismissed from office without the authority of the Secretary of State. Mr. Chamberlain's attention has been called to articles in a Ceylon newspaper, in which Mr. Ramanathan is accused, not of fraud, but of champerty, and I will ask for a report on the subject. So much for the answer to the exact question asked by the noble Lord, but I cannot let the matter drop there. Mr. Ramanathan is a distinguished Tamil gentleman who occupies the important and honourable position of Her Majesty's Solicitor-General in Ceylon. I wonder if the noble Lord who put this question on the Paper has thought what the feeling of that responsible gentleman will be when he sees that the journals of your Lordships' House have been used to convey such gross insinuations against his character. It does not seem to me to be a fair use of Parliamentary questions to put on the Paper a notice containing such imputations merely on information picked up, I know not where or how, and without there being a shadow of foundation for them. On behalf of the office which I have the honour to represent, and which is the guardian of the interests of Her Majesty's servants serving in the colonies, I altogether protest against such use of the privilege of Parliamentary questions.

LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY : The noble Lord has had three months' notice of this.

THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

LORD HAWKESBURY : I beg to ask Her Majesty's Government whether arrangements can be made by which peers may be supplied with copies of *The Parliamentary Debates* in the same way as Members in the House of Commons.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of SALISBURY) : My Lords, I am afraid the question is one of finance. The House of Commons votes

for the benefit of its own members the money to purchase the publication of *Hansard*. I am informed that the House of Commons has not extended that liberality to the House of Lords. I understand that no change can be made in the present year, because no Estimate has been voted. I presume the matter will be for the consideration of the authorities of the Treasury during the coming recess.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Six of the clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten of the clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 29th June 1899.

PRIVATE BILLS [Lords].

(Standing Orders not previously inquired into complied with.)

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz. :—

GLASGOW AND SOUTH-WESTERN RAILWAY BILL [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS [Lords.]

(Standing Orders applicable thereto complied with.)

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz. :—

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 10) BILL. [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time To-morrow.

EDINBURGH CORPORATION BILL. WETHERBY DISTRICT WATER BILL.

Lords Amendments considered, and agreed to.

AIRDRIE AND COATBRIDGE WATER BILL [Lords].

BRISTOL GAS BILL [Lords]. DUNDEE GAS, STREET IMPROVEMENTS, AND TRAMWAYS BILL [Lords].

GAINSBOROUGH URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL (GAS) BILL [Lords].

Read the third time and passed, with Amendments.

WICK AND PULTENEY HARBOURS BILL [Lords].

Queen's consent signified,—read the third time and passed, with Amendments.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 6) BILL.

As amended, considered ; read the third time, and passed.

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE TRAMWAYS AND IMPROVEMENT BILL.

Reported from the Select Committee on Police and Sanitary Regulations Bills, with Amendments.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP K).

COLONEL GUNTER reported from the Committee on Group K of Private Bills, That, in order to meet the convenience of parties, they had adjourned till Monday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

STANDING ORDERS.

Resolution reported from the Committee: "That, in the case of the Birmingham, North Warwickshire, and Stratford-upon-Avon Railway Bill [Lords], the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill, provided that Clause 24 be struck out of the Bill, unless it be proved to the satisfaction of the Committee on the Bill that the said clause has been submitted to a meeting of the proprietors of the Great Western Railway Company, held in accordance with the requirements of Standing Order 64:—That the Committee on the Bill do report how far such Order has been complied with."

Resolution agreed to.

PETITIONS.

GROUND RENTS (TAXATION BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES).

Petitions in favour:—From Orrell, Croydon, Llandanwg, Stretford, Whitby,

Swinton and Pendlebury, Rawtenstall, and Haslingden; to lie upon the Table.

MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.

Petitions in favour:—From Dowlais (nine), Gorllwyn Level, Dyllas (two), British Rhondda, Lower Duffryn, Aberdare, Nantmelyn, Llethyslinkin, and Nantwen Collieries; to lie upon the Table.

ROMAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY IN IRELAND.

Petition from Dublin, against establishment; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petition from Rochester, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

RAILWAY ABANDONMENT.

Copy presented, of Report by the Board of Trade respecting Clyde Navigation Bill and the objects thereof [pursuant to Standing Order 158A]; referred to the Committee on the Bill.

EAST INDIA (RAILWAYS).

Copy presented, of Administration Report on the Railways in India for 1898-9, by A. Brereton, esquire, Director of Railway Traffic and Statistics [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EAST INDIA (FINANCIAL STATEMENT, 1899-1900).

Return presented relative thereto [Address 19th May; *Sir Henry Fowler*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 254.]

CEYLON.

Copy presented of Correspondence relating to Recent Land Legislation in Ceylon [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

MINT.

Copy presented of Twenty-ninth Annual Report of the Deputy Master of the Mint, 1898 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PAPERS LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

1. Lunacy.—Copy of Fifty-third Report of the Commissioners in Lunacy to the Lord Chancellor, with Appendix [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 255.]

2. Public Records (War Department).—Copy of Fifth Schedule of Documents (War Department) which are not considered of sufficient public value to justify their preservation in the Public Record Office [by Act].

3. Charitable Endowments (London).—Further Return relative thereto [ordered 2nd August, 1894; *Mr. Francis Stevenson*]; to be printed. [No. 256.]

STANDING COMMITTEES (CHAIRMEN'S PANEL).

Mr. Arthur O'Connor reported from the Chairmen's Panel: That they had appointed Sir James Fergusson to act as Chairman of the Standing Committee for the consideration of Bills relating to Law, and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, in the place of Mr. Stuart-Wortley.

Report to lie upon the Table.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Mr. Halsey reported from the Committee of Selection: That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, Mr. Mount; and had appointed in substitution, Mr. Talbot.

Mr. Halsey further reported from the Committee: That they had added to the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure, the following fifteen Members in respect of the Board of Education Bill [Lords]: Sir William Anson, Mr. Birrell, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Channing, Sir John Gorst, Mr. Gray, Mr. Jebb, Mr. Brynmor Jones, Sir Ughtred Kay-Shuttleworth, Mr. Grant Lawson, Mr. Herbert Lewis, Colonel Lockwood, Colonel Williams, and Mr. Yoxall.

Mr. Halsey further reported from the Committee: That they had appointed the following Member to the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures: Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Mr. Halsey further reported from the Committee: That they had added to the Standing Committee on Trade (includ

ing Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures, the following fifteen Members in respect of the Telegraphs (Telephonic Communication, etc.) Bill: Mr. Bartley, Mr. Faithfull Begg, Mr. Griffith-Boscawen, Sir Charles Cameron, Mr. Cawley, Mr. Thomas Curran, Mr. Lewis Fry, Mr. Hanbury, Mr. Lough, Mr. Charles M'Arthur, Mr. Nichol, Mr. John Redmond, Mr. Strutt, Mr. Alfred Thomas, and Sir James Woodhouse.

Reports to lie upon the Table.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 8) BILL.

BELFAST AND NORTHERN COUNTIES RAILWAY BILL.

Without Amendment.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 5) BILL.

SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE STIPENDIARY JUSTICE BILL.

FISHGUARD WATER AND GAS BILL.

With Amendments.

Amendments to—

COLONIAL AND FOREIGN BANKS GUARANTEE FUND BILL [Lords].

Without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Education Department under the Elementary Education Acts, 1870 to 1893, to enable the School Board for London to put in force the Lands Clauses Acts." [Education Department Provisional Order Confirmation (London) Bill [Lords].

And, also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to empower the Corporation of Wolverhampton to construct tramways and street improvements, and to make further provision in regard to tramways in and in the neighbourhood of Wolverhampton, and in regard to the electric lighting and water undertakings of the Corporation and the finance of the borough, and for other purposes." [Wolverhampton Corporation Bill [Lords].

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT PROVISIONAL ORDER CONFIRMATION (LONDON) BILL [Lords].

Read 1st; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 253.]

WOLVERHAMPTON CORPORATION BILL [Lords].

Read the first line; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

QUESTIONS.

MILITIA OFFICERS' COMMISSIONS.

GENERAL LAURIE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the two officers of Militia Infantry and the officer of Militia Engineers appointed to commissions in the Royal Garrison Artillery, as published in the *London Gazette* of 13th inst., have passed educational tests and have gone through a course of professional training equal in all respects to the tests and the course of training required from cadets who attend a two years' course of instruction at the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich; whether an open competitive examination was held; whether these candidates passed highest on the list; whether, if they have not passed such educational tests, seeing that such qualifications have been considered absolutely necessary in order that the Royal Artillery may retain its high state of efficiency, he will explain on what grounds these officers have been appointed; and whether these three gentlemen thus appointed to commissions on the 13th instant will be retained as senior on the list of officers to the forty-one cadets who have gone through the course of training at the Royal Military Academy and form the graduating class who after due examination were recommended for commissions on the 24th instant.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): The officers referred to had not passed an open competitive examination; but they had been through a course of professional training sufficient to qualify them for the posts to which they have been appointed. As the Royal Military Academy cannot at present supply suffi-

cient officers to meet the recent enlargement of the Royal Artillery, it was necessary to look elsewhere; and these officers were carefully selected, with reference to the trainings they had gone through and the schools they had passed.

CHANNEL ISLANDS MILITIA.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether the attention of the War Office has been called to the repeated acts of insubordination in the Guernsey Militia during May and June; if, on parade, on 22nd May, they hooted their Adjutant (Captain Pym), and refused to obey orders; whether, on 19th May, a triumphal procession was organised to receive the men imprisoned for insubordination on their release from gaol by the battalion; if, on 19th June, a resolution to return to duty was proposed and negatived by an enormous majority of the North Regiment; whether the Sark Artillery consists of two officers, including the surgeon, and no non-commissioned officers or men; if their guns are dismounted and the gun-carriages were sold at a bazaar; whether the cost of the Channel Islands Militia amounts to £6,900 per annum; and what is the object of retaining them on the Army List.

*MR. WYNDHAM: We have received the following telegram from the general officer commanding:

"22nd May.—Hooting untrue, all drilled well under C.O., but Adjutant's order to dismiss disobeyed.

"19th May.—Believe some friends with instruments met released prisoners when approaching homes.

"20th June.—At a meeting of men's employers some votes for, large majority against resolution to continue drills, but parish constables have since reported that many in favour withheld hands and that large majority wish to finish drills."

There are two officers belonging to the Sark Artillery, but neither men nor armament; nothing is known of the sale referred to. The total cost of the Channel Islands Militia is shown at page 232 of the Army Estimates as £27,300, of which, however, £5,530 is for non-effective charges. The best mode of dealing with the Channel Islands Militia is under the consideration of the Secretary of State.

WEI HAI-WEI GARRISON.

SIR J. COLOMB (Yarmouth): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War to explain the apparent discrepancies between his statement and the figures on page 22 of the Army Estimates as to the constitution of the garrison at Wei-hai-wei; whether there is to be at that place one company of Chinese artillery and six companies of Chinese infantry, as stated by him, or five companies of Chinese infantry and no local garrison artillery, as stated in the Estimates; and if the proposed constitution of the garrison at Wei-hai-wei has been changed and augmented since the Army Estimates were ordered to be printed on 22nd February last, what is now proposed to be the numerical strength of the garrison, and when and why was such alteration made; and whether he can give any assurance that there will be no further increase in number or cost of military forces to be locked up at Wei-hai-wei.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The figures given in my statement correctly give the approved garrison of Wei-hai-wei. Those shown at page 22 of the Estimates represent, as stated in the footnote, that portion of the garrison which we expected to raise during the current year. There is no present intention of augmenting the approved garrison.

SIR J. COLOMB: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the Army Estimates of last year provided for an excess of garrison artillery and infantry over the War Office scale of requirements of garrisons at home and abroad; if not, how is it proposed to provide the one company of garrison artillery and $\frac{2}{3}$ battalion of infantry for Wei-hai-wei without creating a corresponding deficiency elsewhere, having regard to the fact that this year's Army Estimates show that no increase has been made to the infantry, and that only seventeen (all ranks) have been added to the garrison artillery since last year.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The two companies of British infantry required for Wei-hai-wei will be provided by the battalion at Hong Kong, their place being taken by native troops. As some time must elapse before the defences of Wei-hai-wei can be completed, there is no immediate necessity for deciding the source from which the garrison company

will be drawn, but the alterations about to be made in the armament of our foreign stations will, it is hoped, release a certain number of garrison artillerymen.

DINGWALL AND THE SEAFORTH HIGHLANDERS.

MR. HEDDERWICK (Wick Burghs): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether the War Office have received a petition from the magistrates and Town Council of Dingwall praying for the establishment of a depot for the 3rd battalion of the Seaforth Highlanders at Dingwall; and, whether any sum out of the moneys to be appropriated under the Military Loans Bill will be allocated for this object; if not, whether the War Office will at least consider the propriety of enlarging the building in Dingwall now occupied by the staff of the battalion mentioned, so as to accommodate the whole of the staff instead of one-third only, as at present.

*MR. WYNDHAM: A resolution of the Town Council of Dingwall, of the 23rd March last, was duly received, and replied to on the 5th of April. The Secretary of State sees no reason for altering the decision already expressed to the House on more than one occasion during this session, and no sum has been appropriated towards the barracks at Dingwall under the Military Works Loans Bill.

THE ARMY TEMPERANCE ASSOCIATION.

MR. HEDDERWICK: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether it is intended to provide, in the new barracks which the Government purpose to erect, properly equipped rooms for the members of the Army Temperance Association.

*MR. WYNDHAM: I will make a statement upon this point when the Military Works Bill is before the House.

COMMANDS AT NAVAL BASES.

SIR J. COLOMB: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War to state the names of the Naval bases and coaling stations at which officers of other arms of the service, previously in command, have been superseded in that command by conferring upon the officers of Royal Engineers, junior to them, local rank, on the ground that important building works necessitating heavy expenditure of public

money are under consideration, and that the senior officer should therefore belong to the Royal Engineers; and, further, state to what arms of the service the officers thus superseded in command at each place respectively belonged.

*MR. WYNDHAM: There is no case other than that at Esquimalt. The reasons for the action then taken were explained in my answer of the 12th May to the hon. Member for Kincardineshire.

CANTEEN AND MESS CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETY, LIMITED.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office, is he aware that the Canteen and Mess Co-operative Society, Limited, is under the management of a number of officers on the active list, and that the Society enters into competition with the regular traders seeking business amongst the canteens in Great Britain and Ireland; and is it in accordance with the Queen's Regulations that these officers should hold the positions which they do in this society; and, if not, will they be called upon to retire from the society.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS, Birmingham, S.): The Canteen and Mess Co-operative Society is a provident society formed for the purpose of obtaining and distributing the supplies sold to the troops in the regimental canteens. It has been decided that it is not a "company" within the terms of the Queen's Regulations to which the hon. Member refers, and it is not held that officers on the full-pay list are prohibited from serving on the Committee.

MR. FLYNN: Is it the fact that this provident society pays a dividend of 4 or 5 per cent.? Is it fair, under these circumstances, that it should compete with ordinary tradesmen of the country?

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: The dividend is limited to 5 per cent., and the society is not carried on, therefore, for profit. Those who found the capital for it cannot receive more than 5 per cent., and anything earned beyond that goes to the benefit of others.

MR. FLYNN: I shall call attention to the position held by these officers.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): Are not the headquarters of this society located in London?

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: Yes.

CAPTAIN DONELAN: Has it any business establishment in Ireland?

MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: I do not think it has any separate establishment in Ireland. Its agencies are to be found throughout the kingdom.

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office if he can state how many Officers of the Army Service Corps, interested directly, or as shareholders indirectly, in the Canteen and Mess Co-operative Society (Limited), are employed as inspectors of rations, and in this capacity have the passing or the rejection of supplies from this Society in which they are so interested.

***MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS**: Only two officers of the Army Service Corps are employed in the inspection of canteen supplies, and neither of them has any interest, either direct or indirect, in the Canteen and Mess Co-operative Society.

MR. FLYNN: Did not one of these two gentlemen go to Cork to inspect the tenders for the last contract?

***MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS**: The hon. Member is under a misapprehension; I suppose he refers to an officer named King. It is not the same man.

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Cork): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office in reference to the contract for the supply of all groceries, provisions, and household sundries to the Cork Military District recently given to the Canteen and Mess Co-operative Society, whether one at least of the officers on the board which decided the contract was formerly a member of the committee of management of the society; whether the board was advised in regard to the contract by an officer who came specially from London to advocate the claim of the Canteen and Mess Society; and has this officer any pecuniary interest in taking this action.

***MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS**: Of the seven officers who composed the board which adjudicated upon the tenders for canteen supplies in the Cork district one had, in 1896, served, as

representative of Aldershot, on the Committee of Management of the Canteen and Mess Co-operative Society, but he never had any pecuniary interest in the society. Captain King, who as inspector of canteen supplies attends, when available, all boards on district contracts for the supply of canteens, attended the board on the occasion referred to, but he has no interest, either direct or indirect, in the Canteen and Mess Co-operative Society, and is in no way connected with its management.

MR. FLYNN: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that this Co-operative Society were given the contract in the Cork district at prices in excess of those quoted by a local firm, a list of which I can supply privately?

***MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS**: I should be glad to see the list to which the hon. Member refers, as my information absolutely contradicts that statement.

POONA DISTURBANCES--THE NATU BROTHERS.

MR. DAVITT (Mayo, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if the Natu brothers are still imprisoned as a consequence of the late disturbances at Poona; if he can state where they are confined and how they are treated; whether in the trials of the men who have been executed for the murder of a British officer any evidence of any kind implicating the Natus was given; and whether if the Government of India does not see its way to release men who are imprisoned without trial, an opportunity will be given to them to prove their innocence before some tribunal.

***THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA** (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The Natus are not imprisoned, but restraints upon their liberty of movement continue to be imposed for the reason stated by me in this House on the 21st of April, 1898, and on other occasions—namely, that the Government of Bombay is not yet satisfied that public tranquillity and order will not be endangered by their withdrawal. The Sardars are living in the district of Belgaum, subject to no restrictions except the disability to leave that district. The Natus are not charged with abetment of the murder referred to, and the answer to the third clause of the question is in the

negative. As regards the continuance of their detention under Regulation 25, 1827, which is only applicable in cases where judicial proceedings are not deemed advisable, I have already stated in this House that I do not propose to interfere with the discretion of the Government of Bombay, who are primarily responsible for the maintenance of order and tranquillity in their province.

MR. DAVITT: May I ask the noble Lord whether, as these two gentlemen are British subjects, they ought not to have a fair trial?

(No answer was given.)

MECCA PILGRIMAGES.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he will communicate to the House copies of the Notes which have been addressed to the Porte by Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, demanding pecuniary compensation on behalf of Mohammedan British subjects who have been outraged between Jeddah and the cities of Mecca and Medina when performing religious duties in the Hedjaz; and whether, as seven years have elapsed since the attention of the Porte was called to the inability of the Governor-General of Turkish Arabia to protect pilgrims from murder, outrage, and plunder, Her Majesty's Government will now join the Government of the Netherlands in making renewed representations to his Imperial Majesty the Sultan on the subject of the safe conduct of British and Dutch subjects whilst travelling on the highways and turnpike roads in Arabia on a visit to the Mohammedan shrines.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): It is true that in 1892 Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople represented strongly to the Porte the need of measures to prevent attacks by Bedouins on British Indian pilgrims, and orders were then issued for their adoption. But further representations have been made since then on the insecurity of the Mecca and Medina roads. In October, 1896, Sir P. Currie sent a Note to the Porte on the subject again. In February of this year Sir N. O'Connor called their attention to robberies committed in the Hedjaz

between 1892 and 1898, and presented a *note verbal* on the claims of British Indian subjects for compensation. I shall be happy to show these notes, if desired, to the hon. Member, but do not propose to lay them on the Table of the House.

THE TRANSVAAL—THE KILLING OF MR. EDGAR.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies, on what grounds the demand for compensation for the widow of Edgar was based.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): On the ground that Edgar was killed without justification by an officer of the Government of the South African Republic.

MR. DAVITT: Did not the jury acquit the officer of the charge of murder, and find that Edgar made an attack upon him with a loaded stick?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I do not think that is quite accurate. The jury acquitted him, but I do not think they made any finding to the effect stated by the hon. Member.

NEGOTIATIONS WITH PRESIDENT KRUGER.

MR. J. M. MACLEAN (Cardiff): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies, whether Sir Alfred Milner has been instructed to accept, as a basis for further negotiations, any proposals made by President Kruger for the enfranchisement of the Uitlanders which are in advance of the terms offered by the President at Bloemfontein.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I have already stated that Her Majesty's Government are awaiting the receipt of despatches reporting the proceedings of the Conference before further instructions are given to the High Commissioner. No proposals other than those made at the Conference have up to the present time been communicated to the High Commissioner.

MR. HOFMEYR.

MR. J. M. MACLEAN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies, whether he has received any information concerning the statement, telegraphed yesterday from Cape Town, that Mr.

Hofmeyr has publicly protested against the policy pursued by the Colonial Office in its correspondence with the Government of the South African Republic. Before putting this question I wish to point out that an alteration has been made in the question as handed in at the Table. This alteration has enlarged the scope of my inquiry very much and has made it inapplicable to Mr. Hofmeyr's position. It has never been suggested that Mr. Hofmeyr is hostile to the enfranchisement of the Uitlanders, which commands everyone's approval, but merely that he has criticised very freely the tone of the right hon. Gentleman's despatches on matters of detail.

MR. SPEAKER: The question was submitted at the Table with a qualifying adjective in front of the word "policy," which was struck out with my consent and approbation as being contrary to the rules of the House.

MR. J. M. MACLEAN: My only desire, Sir, is to point out that the alteration has so enlarged the scope of the question that as it stands on the Paper it is not fair to Mr. Hofmeyr.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: In whatever form the question is put, the answer is in the negative.

TRANSVAAL FRANCHISE.

MR. C. P. SCOTT (Lancashire, Leigh): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can state approximately what number of electors qualified to vote for the First Raad would be added to the Transvaal electorate if all the Outlanders who could obtain the franchise under the amended franchise law proposed by Mr. Kruger were to be enrolled; and whether he is aware that Mr. Kruger, in his speech at Rustenburg on 25th March, estimated that 30,000 new burghers would be added to the existing 40,000 by an even smaller change than that now proposed by him.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I am unable to give information, but I am making inquiries. President Kruger in the speech referred to is reported to have said that if the period for Uitlanders obtaining the franchise were reduced from fourteen years to nine years there would be—presumably, at the end of that period—70,000 burghers, and to have said that now there are 30,000 or 40,000 burghers. This calcula-

tion, in any case, can only be a hypothetical estimate, and it must be observed that whatever might be the number of new burghers the representation allotted to them under Sir A. Milner's proposal would not exceed one-fifth of the members of the First Raad.

SIERRA LEONE.

SIR BENJAMIN STONE (Birmingham, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies when the Report on the subject of the rebellion in Sierra Leone will be presented to the House.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I hope to be in a position to present the Report next week. I very much regret that the Report has been so long delayed. It is in no way the fault of the Colonial Office. It had to be submitted to the Governor for his observations. Both the Report and his reply were extremely voluminous, and I have had to consider them carefully in order to come to a decision on a great number of contested and complicated questions.

WEST AFRICAN SPIRIT DUTIES.

SIR MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbrightshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the minimum tariff on spirits imported into West Africa has been raised to 80 francs per hectolitre; and, if not, what is the exact amount in francs decided upon by the Brussels Conference as the minimum duty, and also what is the exact duty to be levied in Togoland and Dahomey, also in francs; and if he can state whether any steps have been taken to protect the hinterland of the West African possessions from the introduction of spirits, and whether the prohibition clause of the Brussels General Act of 1890 has been reaffirmed.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The minimum has been fixed at 70 francs per hectolitre at 50 deg. C., with an exception of 60 francs per hectolitre at 50 deg. C. for Togoland and Dahomey. The duty will increase proportionally for each degree above 50 deg. C. It was unnecessary to reaffirm the prohibition clause of the Brussels General Act of 1890, but a protocol was annexed to the present Convention stating that the signatory powers reserve to themselves the right to take each with its full liberty of action the necessary steps to prevent the introduc-

tion of spirits into the zones of prohibition contemplated by Art. XCI. of the General Act of 1890.

THE AUSTRAL CYCLE AGENCY.

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the proceedings in connection with the Austral Cycle Agency, Limited, which was formed in December, 1896; whether any meetings save the statutory meetings have ever been held; and have any returns as required by the Act of Parliament been lodged with the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies; is he aware that the Company is now in liquidation; and what steps will be taken in regard to this company by the Board of Trade?

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): My attention has not been specially called to the matter in question. The annual returns required by the Companies Acts have been filed with the Registrar in respect of the years 1897 and 1899, but the return for 1898 has not been filed. A resolution for the voluntary winding-up of the company was also filed on May 31st last. Voluntary liquidations are not subject to the supervision of the Board of Trade.

RAILWAY BYE-LAWS.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the new code of railway bye-laws which was submitted to the Board upwards of a year and a-half ago, and remitted to the railway companies with certain modifications and suggestions, has again been submitted to the Board for confirmation; and, if not, will he state what steps he proposes to take with a view to the early adoption of a new and satisfactory code of railway bye-laws.

MR. RITCHIE: The Board of Trade have no power to make bye-laws. Their function is to approve or disapprove bye-laws proposed by the railway companies. If the companies are not prepared to submit a code of bye-laws on behalf of railway companies generally the Department can only continue to urge them to take some common action. This has been and will continue to be, the policy of the Board.

OVERCROWDING ON RAILWAYS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, having regard to

the fact that the overcrowding of railway carriages is in great measure due to passengers being unaware that when there is no room in the class of carriage for which they have taken their tickets they are entitled to travel in a carriage of a superior class, will he consider the expediency of suggesting to railway companies that a notice to this effect should be posted up in the carriages.

MR. RITCHIE: No, Sir; I cannot admit that the hon. Member's question accurately states the position, and I am unable therefore to take the action he suggests.

MR. WEIR: Is the right hon. Gentleman unaware that the carriages of trains on the lines running into London are always overcrowded?

MR. RITCHIE: The hon. Gentleman and others have drawn my attention to this matter repeatedly. I have said all I have to say on the subject, and I can add nothing more.

MERSEY FISHERIES.

MR. HARWOOD (Bolton): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if the Lancashire Sea Fisheries Joint Committee has asked for the approval of the Board of Trade in putting further limitations upon fishing on the Burbo Bank, in the Mersey estuary; and whether that approval has been or will be given.

MR. RITCHIE: The Lancashire Sea Fisheries Joint Committee has asked for the approval of the Board of Trade to a bye-law limiting the kind of nets or instruments to be used in fishing for shrimps or prawns in a certain part of the Mersey estuary, including, I believe, part of the Burbo Bank. The proposed bye-law is now being considered by the Board of Trade, but I am not yet able to say what the decision will be.

YORK CHARITIES.

MR. ALFRED PEASE (Yorkshire, Cleveland): I beg to ask the hon. Member for Thirsk and Malton, as representing the Charity Commissioners, whether he is aware that in the year 1837 and 1838 the municipal charities of the City of York were placed under the control of a body of thirteen trustees, and that the number of trustees through various circumstances became reduced in 1896; whether, in accordance with former procedure, certain

names were approved in conference between the surviving trustees and the City Corporation, and these names submitted to the Charity Commissioners for confirmation; whether after long delay the Charity Commissioners have intimated their intention to add five other names in addition to the eight agreed upon by the trustees and the Corporation; and whether he is able to state what reason there is to depart from what has been the invariable practice for over sixty years with respect to the number of the trustees?

THE PARLIAMENTARY CHARITY COMMISSIONER (Mr. GRANT LAWSON, Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk): The facts are generally as stated in the question of my hon. friend. There is no particular reason for the limitation of the number of trustees to thirteen. That limitation and the fact that municipal trustees are often elderly gentlemen has resulted in the past in the speedy reduction of the number of acting trustees to a figure unduly small. To confine the new body to thirteen would compel the Commissioners to reject some of the names submitted to them by resolution and memorial. The responsibility for the appointment of trustees rests with the Commissioners and not with the Corporation or the surviving trustees, but the Commissioners propose to appoint all the gentlemen whose names have been suggested, thus raising the number of trustees to 18. Before doing so they will publish all the names in the locality so as to elicit objections, if there are any, to the personal fitness of the gentlemen whom it is proposed to appoint.

Mr. J. E. ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): On what ground did the Charity Commissioners arrive at the decision to increase the number of trustees from 13 to 18. Under what power did they act?

Mr. GRANT LAWSON: There is no limit by law or under the scheme. They may appoint as many as they like.

EDINBURGH TELEGRAPH CLERKS.

Mr. STEADMAN (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster-General, whether certain telegraph clerks at Edinburgh, having arrived at the efficiency barrier, are being asked by

the Controller to furnish particulars with reference to their technical knowledge, and their further progress been threatened; and whether, in view of Paragraph 6 of the Postal Circular, dated Tuesday, 10th August, 1897, containing the decision of the Norfolk-Hanbury Conference, the Postmaster-General will cause an inquiry to be made into the circumstances.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HANBURY, Preston): The case of several telegraphists in Edinburgh whose salaries had approached the efficiency bar came under consideration, and, in regard to two of these telegraphists, the Controller thought it only right to satisfy himself, before reporting them as not qualified to pass the bar, by personal inquiry respecting their efficiency. Beyond this there was no intention to examine them in regard to their technical knowledge. The Tweedmouth Committee, on whose recommendation the efficiency bar was introduced, stated in their Report that no officer should be allowed to pass this bar without a satisfactory certificate of the excellence of his conduct and of his ability to perform the highest duties of his class. The two officers in question in Edinburgh could not, unfortunately, be certified to be fully qualified for these duties.

DUNDALK POSTMASTER.

Mr. MACALEESE: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster-General, when the new Postmaster at Dundalk will take up his duties; what is the date of the gentleman's appointment; and is he an Irishman.

Mr. HANBURY: The new Postmaster will take up his duties on the 1st July, the appointment having been conferred upon him by the Postmaster-General on the 13th June. He has served in Ireland for upwards of 34 years.

Mr. MACALEESE: What about his nationality?

Mr. HANBURY: I do not think inquiry was made into that.

LONDONDERRY HISTORY AND ORD- NANCE SURVEY.

Mr. TUIE (Westmeath, N): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury can he state the amount paid by the Government for the publication of the History

and Ordnance Survey of the County of Londonderry in the year 1837, and on what grounds was the continuation of the work for the remaining thirty-one counties abandoned; and is he aware that the manuscripts of the other counties at present in the Museum, Dublin, are becoming obliterated, and will be lost to the nation if not re-written or published very soon.

MR. HANBURY: "The Memoir on Londonderry" dealt only with a single parish—the City and North Western Liberties of Londonderry, Parish of Templemore—and not with the whole county. Its cost amounted to £1,705, but, in addition, considerable labour was expended on its preparation by the officers and men of the Ordnance Survey. The work was not continued partly on the ground of expense, and partly because it dealt with many subjects unconnected with the Ordnance Survey—such as geology, botany, zoology, antiquities, history, education and commerce. There is no foundation for the statement in the last paragraph of the question. On the contrary, the manuscripts (which are kept by the Royal Irish Academy and not in the Museum) are reported to be in excellent preservation and order.

DOG TAX IN THE HIGHLANDS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury when the new regulations for the guidance of Inland Revenue officers in regard to granting of certificates of exemption from dog tax in the Highlands of Scotland will be issued.

MR. HANBURY: It is not proposed to issue any new regulations. I undertook to see if the same principles could not be applied everywhere, and I have no reason to doubt that that is being done.

CARRICKROE POSTAL ARRANGEMENTS.

MR. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster-General, whether he is aware that dissatisfaction exists in the districts around Carrickroe sub post-office, owing to the way the deliveries of letters and parcels have been regulated by the postal authorities, some townlands being served four times a week while others are served only twice; is he aware that letters for one portion of the townland of Bragan reach-

ing Carrickroe on Friday must remain there till the following Monday before being sent out for delivery, while letters for other parts of the same townland are delivered on Saturday; and, will an effort be made to devise measures which will ensure a uniform delivery and allay the discontent prevailing on this subject.

MR. HANBURY: It is the case that some of the townlands near Carrickroe are served four times a week, while others are served twice a week only. Letters for one portion of the townland of Bragan are delivered on Mondays and Thursdays; consequently, letters arriving on Friday would not be delivered in that district till Monday, although they would be delivered on Saturdays at the places served four times a week. The frequency of the deliveries is regulated by the amount of correspondence and the relative cost. The correspondence for the districts in question is very small, and additional expense for an improved service is not at present warranted.

OFFICES OF PARLIAMENT COMMITTEE.

MR. DILLON: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury how often the Joint Committee on the Offices of the Houses of Lords and Commons has met, and when it may be expected to report.

MR. HANBURY: The Committee has met twice and has examined six witnesses. It is expected to meet again very shortly to consider its Report.

UPKEEP OF SCOTTISH CASTLES.

MR. PIRIE (Aberdeenshire, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he can state what is the sum collected annually as feu blench and teind duties in Scotland, and which used formerly to be paid to the Governors of Edinburgh and Stirling Castles and to the offices of Keeper of the Palace of Linlithgow and Castle of Blackness, specifying the amount for each of the places named; also since what date have these moneys been paid into the Imperial Exchequer; and what has been the average annual amount spent on the maintenance and upkeep of the buildings of the Palace of Linlithgow during the ten years 1889–98.

MR. HANBURY: The sums collected by the Commissioners of Woods as feu blench and teind duties in Scotland, which used formerly to be paid to the

Governors of Edinburgh and Stirling Castles and to the Keepers of the Palace of Linlithgow and Castle of Blackness, are approximately as follows:—Edinburgh Castle, £525; Stirling Castle, £157; Linlithgow Palace and Blackness Castle, £190. The Edinburgh Castle duties were first paid to the Commissioners of Woods for the year 1860, the Stirling Castle duties for the year 1847, and the Linlithgow and Blackness duties for the year 1853. Since those dates they have been paid over to the Imperial Exchequer. It is believed that prior to those dates they were received by the governors and keepers of the castles, etc. No figures can be given regarding the ordinary maintenance of the buildings of Linlithgow Palace as distinguished from that of the park. But in 1892-3 and the two subsequent years £761 17s. 8d. was expended on special repairs at the Palace.

TAX DISTRICTS.

MR. J. H. JOHNSTONE (Sussex, Horsham): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will state how many of the new tax districts sanctioned by the Treasury in November last have been created, and whether any delay in creating the full number has been caused by the want of experienced assistant surveyors to be placed in charge of them; if, having regard to the increase in the work of the surveyors of taxes, he will consider the desirability of making provision for an adequate and regular supply of trained assistants and of clerks on the permanent establishment of the Civil Service; and, as many surveyors are unable or unwilling to take the full amount of the leave to which they are entitled on account of the accumulation of work in their absence, if he will consider the advisability of providing for an adequate relief staff; and if the Board of Inland Revenue are taking any steps (by the sanction of increased assistance or otherwise) to remove the increased pressure in the ordinary work of the surveyors caused by the revised form of the Abstracts of the Assessments for 1898-9.

MR. HANBURY: Nine of the new districts are in process of formation and will soon be constituted. Difficulties have arisen from the want of experienced assistant surveyors. I fully recognise that arrangements should be made which

will enable surveyors under ordinary circumstances to take the full amount of leave to which they are entitled. At the present moment the question of making a permanent addition to the number of assistant surveyors, and thereby increasing for the future both the strength of the relief staff and the supply of assistants qualified for the post of surveyor, as well as the question of affording better clerical assistance, is under consideration, and in this connection the work involved in making the Abstracts of Assessments will not be overlooked. In the meantime all necessary temporary assistance is being given for this work.

NEWBLISS POSTMAN.

MR. MACALEESE: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster-General, whether the entire amount of 3s. a week, allocated for the salary of the recently appointed postman at Newbliss, County Monaghan, goes to that official exclusively, or is a portion of it, and how much, devoted to another purpose; can he now say what are the precise duties this postman is expected to perform for the allocated sum of 3s. a week; and on what basis of living is the salary calculated.

MR. HANBURY: The entire amount of 3s. a week is paid to the postman at Newbliss referred to in the hon. Member's question. This postman works for sixty-five minutes a day.

SECONDARY EDUCATION IN BANFFSHIRE.

SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN (Banffshire): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the Secretary for Scotland has received a memorial, dated 13th instant, from the Banffshire County Committee on Secondary Education, complaining that, under the Minute of 27th April last, no portion of the grant of £35,000 for secondary education will come to the County of Banff; whether he is aware that Professor Laurie, examiner for the Dick Bequest, stated publicly that no area, even in Germany and America, of the same size furnished higher education to a larger number of pupils than did the County of Banff; whether, seeing that the only secondary education in Banffshire is provided by secondary departments in State-aided elementary schools, the Department

will so modify the Minute of 27th April as to give to these secondary departments a reasonable share of the £35,000 grant; and whether the Department can see its way to suspend the 17s. 6d. limit as regards grants to the schools having secondary departments.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): The memorial to which the hon. Member refers has been received and is under consideration. I have every reason to believe that much good educational work of a higher kind is accomplished in the County of Banffshire. For the reasons already given the Department is not prepared to alter the provisions of the Minute of 27th April, and as the 17s. 6d. limit is statutory the Department cannot suspend its operations.

FISHERMEN'S DWELLINGS IN SCOTLAND.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the Congested Districts Board have yet been able to make arrangements for the erection and formation of fishermen's dwellings and holdings, as provided for under Section 4, Subsection (e), of the Congested Districts (Scotland) Act, 1897; and if so, in what districts.

MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I am informed by the Congested Districts Board that negotiations are still pending in connection with the formation of such holdings as are referred to in the hon. Member's question.

MR. WEIR: What about the last part of the question?

MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I have not that information, but I will communicate with the hon. Member privately.

VALTOS PIER.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the Congested Districts Board have yet arrived at a decision in regard to an application made to the Board in February last by the County Council of Ross and Cromarty, urging that the grant in aid of the construction of a pier at Valtos (Lewis) should be increased to £1,900.

MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I am informed by the Congested Districts Board that on the 13th of May last a grant of £1,800, or 92 per cent. of the

total estimated cost of the Valtos Pier was intimated to the local authority, but to this there has as yet been no reply.

SCOTTISH PRISON RULES.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the Prison Commissioners for Scotland have adopted, or propose to adopt, such of the new rules for local and convict prisons in England as are improvements on those in Scotland; and, if so, what changes will be made.

MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: A fair comparison cannot be drawn between the rules for prisons in Scotland and those for prisons in England, as the former have been revised and brought up to date so recently as 1896. But some changes in the Scottish prison rules and dietaries are at present under the consideration of the Prison Commissioners.

SCOTTISH CONSTABULARY.

SIR JOHN LENG: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the Government have had under consideration the Report of Captain Monro, dated 31st December last, recommending legislation with regard to several matters having vital importance and bearing on the efficiency, general usefulness, and cost of the Scottish constabulary and police; and whether it is intended to give effect to Captain Monro's recommendations.

MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: The annual report of Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary for 1898 has been considered by the Secretary for Scotland, who cannot promise at present to attempt legislation on the subjects of the recommendations therein made.

DRUNKENNESS IN SCOTLAND.

MR. PIRIE: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate, as representing the Secretary for Scotland, whether, in the interests of Scotland, and with a view of urging the Government to introduce legislation to meet the requirements of the case, he will call the attention of the Government to the following facts brought out by the Report of the Prison Commissioners for Scotland:—1. That the committals to prison in that country during 1898 have exceeded the average of the previous five years by more than 5,000, and that the Commissioners clearly attribute this fact to the habit of drinking to excess, which

has increased among the wage-earning classes to the point that it is designated in the Report as an epidemic of drunkenness; 2. That an examination was recently made at Barlinnie Prison, Glasgow, into the cases of 245 prisoners with longest sentences; that it was ascertained that 171 of these prisoners were under the influence of drink when their crime was committed, whilst only 74 were sober; and that 101 out of these 245 crimes were committed on Saturdays, compared to an average of 28 for the other six days of the week, thereby proving, as this is a typical case, that Saturdays are not only the days on which offences under the head of drunkenness reach their maximum, but that is also the day on which the maximum number of serious crimes are committed; and, if steps could be taken to comply with the strong recommendation contained in the Report of Captain David Munro, Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabulary in Scotland, that The Public Houses, Hours of Closing (Scotland) Act, 1887, should be made compulsory throughout Scotland, so as to lessen the evils disclosed by the above state of affairs.

MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: The paragraph in the Report of the Prison Commissioners for Scotland, to which the hon. Member refers, has, along with the rest of the Report, been the subject of consideration by the Secretary for Scotland, but he cannot at present add anything to the answer I have just given to the hon. Member for Dundee.

POLICE GAZETTE FOR SCOTLAND.

MR. PIRIE: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he can explain why no steps have hitherto been taken to comply with the recommendation of the Select Committee of the House of Lords on Scottish Police System, made in 1868, that a *Police Gazette* for Scotland should be established; and whether, seeing that the establishment of such a gazette was strongly recommended by the Inspector of Constabulary for Scotland in 1872, and has again been urged in the Report for 1898 by the present inspector, action will be taken.

MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: As the recommendation referred to in the first paragraph of the question was made thirty-one years ago, since which many changes in the police system have occurred,

the hon. Member has imposed rather a heavy task on me in asking me to consider the matter on its merits in response to a question which only appeared on the Paper this morning. As regards the second paragraph of the question, I shall be happy to reply if the hon. Member will put the question on the Paper with adequate notice.

LEAD POISONING AT HANLEY.

SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the report of an inquest on a lead-poisoning case held at Hanley on the 21st June, and to the remarks of the Coroner stating that an application from the Manufacturers' Association had reached him through the Home Secretary, who suggested that he should allow the Manufacturers' Association to be represented at every inquest where lead poisoning was alleged, and to the Coroner's dissent from the recognition of any such association as being in any way a party interested in individual cases; whether the Coroner has declared his intention of himself calling in a medical man in every such case to make a post-mortem examination and give evidence, without necessarily requiring the attendance of the doctor acquainted with the past history of the case who has given the death certificate; whether the post-mortem in the recent case was a mere naked eye examination; and whether he will use his influence with the Coroner to cause chemical analysis of the organs in any such post-mortem examination.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir M. WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): I have made inquiry regarding the case mentioned, and I learn from the Coroner that, while he objects to recognising the Manufacturers' Association, he is quite willing to allow the Secretary of the Association to appear on behalf of any manufacturer who desires to be so represented. This seems to me a satisfactory arrangement. The Coroner further informs me that he proposes to call in an independent medical man in every case of suspected lead poisoning to make a thorough post-mortem examination, and where necessary to order also a chemical analysis. I understand that in the present

case he considered such analysis unnecessary. These are points, as the right hon. Gentleman knows, within the Coroner's discretion.

THE DEAN OF ARCHES.

MR. CHARLES M'ARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether Sir Arthur Charles has been appointed by the Archbishop of Canterbury to be Dean of Arches under the provisions of the Public Worship Regulation Act, 1874, or irrespective thereof; whether the judge about to be appointed under Section 7 of that Act by the Archbishops, with the approval of the Crown, will become ex officio Dean of Arches and Official Principal of the Chancery Court of York; and whether there is any law under which a new Dean of Arches can be appointed while a vacancy in the office of judge, under the aforesaid Act, remains unfilled.

*SIR M. WHITE RIDLEY: I am informed that letters patent have been issued by the Archbishop of Canterbury purporting to appoint Sir Arthur Charles to be Dean of Arches irrespectively of the Public Worship Regulation Act, 1874. The second and third paragraphs of the question raise a point of law, on which I understand that different opinions are entertained and on which I have no authority to pronounce.

TITHE RENT-CHARGE (RATES) BILL.

MR. STRACHEY (Somerset, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture if he can state what sum will be deducted in each case from the amount payable to each county borough or administrative county out of the Local Taxation Grant to provide the £87,000 taken from the grant under the Tithe Rent-charge (Rates) Bill.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. LONG, Liverpool, West Derby): I understand the hon. Member to ask what would be the share of each administrative county and county borough in a sum of £87,000 distributed as the estate duty is distributed, that is, in the proportion of what are known as the discontinued grants. To give this information in every case would necessitate a considerable number of somewhat elaborate calculations, but I may perhaps say that in the case of the hon. Member's

own county—Somersetshire—the amount would be £1,416, or between one-seventh and one-eighth of a penny in the pound of the rateable value of the county, and the result is not materially different in other cases.

MR. J. H. ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he will state what is the amount of the sums now annually paid in lieu of tithe which will come within the provisions of the Tithe Rent-charge (Rates) Bill.

*MR. LONG: No information is available as to the amount of the payments to which the hon. Member refers, but it is not of any magnitude as compared with that of the tithe rent-charges themselves, and it is of course only where the payments are rateable, which is not always the case, that any relief would be afforded under the Bill.

MR. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture what is the amount of tithe rent-charge held by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, who pay the proceeds to augment the income of benefices, and why the relief granted under the Tithe Rent-charge (Rates) Bill is not extended to rates on tithe rent-charge in the hands of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners.

*MR. LONG: The commuted amount of the tithe rent-charge in the possession of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners may be taken at £350,000. It is not proposed to extend the provisions of the Bill to the income thus received by the Commissioners, as it appears to us there is a clear distinction between tithe rent-charge specifically assigned to a particular benefice and tithe rent-charge forming part of a common fund such as that in the hands of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners.

MR. CHANNING: But is not the tithe rent-charge held by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners as a trust, in order to dispose of its proceeds for the benefit of incumbents?

*MR. LONG: That is so, I believe.

MR. CHANNING: Then why is not the same principle applied to them?

(No answer was given.)

MR. J. H. ROBERTS : I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when the Committee stage of the Tithe Rent-charge (Rates) Bill will be taken.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.) : I propose to put it down for Thursday next.

SALE OF INTOXICANTS IN THE PRECINCTS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cumberland, Cockermouth) : I beg to ask the noble Lord the Member for Oxford whether the sale of intoxicating liquors to the public is still being carried on in the lobbies and precincts of the House under the sanction of the Kitchen Committee.

*VISCOUNT VALENTIA (Oxford City) : The public are only admitted to the precincts of the House on Saturdays, when the bars are closed. Such persons as attend the House on business on other days are not precluded by the Kitchen Committee from availing themselves of such conveniences as are provided for hon. Members.

SIR W. LAWSON : Is the noble Lord aware that the Attorney-General has stated in this House that this sale of liquor is illegal ?

*MR. SPEAKER : Order, order ! The question on the paper has been fully answered.

SMALL-POX AT HULL.

MR. R. G. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.) : I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the small-pox epidemic is increasing at Hull ; and if there are also more cases of that disease notified at Grimsby.

*THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, Tyrone, E.) : There has lately been an increase of small-pox in Hull. Between the 2nd March and the 15th June there were sixty-one attacks, and since the 15th June twenty-two more cases have been notified. All the known cases at present existing are in the isolation hospital. A person suffering from small-pox landed at Grimsby on the 21st instant from a ship which had left Hull on the 19th. The patient was at once removed to the hospital, and no other case has since been reported.

MR. R. G. WEBSTER : Had the persons attacked been vaccinated ?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL : I must ask for notice of that question.

THE COTTAGE HOMES BILL.

MR. JOSEPH A. PEASE (Northumberland, Tyneside) : I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to certain paragraphs appearing in *The Times* newspaper on 28th June, containing information extracted from a strictly confidential draft Special Report to be proposed by the Under Secretary to the Local Government Board for the consideration of the Select Committee on the Cottage Homes Bill ; and whether he can state how the information was obtained by a member of the Press ; if not, whether an inquiry will be held to ascertain this ; and whether steps will be taken to prevent such incidents.

*MR. T. W. RUSSELL : This is a matter for the Select Committee, not for the Local Government Board. Investigations are being made.

DISPENSARY DISTRICTS IN MONAGHAN COUNTY.

MR. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.) : I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the parish of Errigal Truagh, which comprises five units under the Local Government Act, with a population (in 1891) of 3,745 souls, has not a resident doctor within its boundaries ; whether he is aware that the area of the Monaghan portion of this parish is 21,171 acres, and that the general bulk of the people are amongst the poorest found even in the congested districts in Ireland, and remain dependent upon the services of a medical officer who resides in Aughnacloy, two miles outside the Monaghan union, from which town many of the poor in Errigal parish are separated by a distance of no less than fourteen miles ; and whether he will advise the Local Government Board, in the interests of the poor, to consider favourably the views of the Monaghan Guardians, and have the five units of Truagh constituted a dispensary district with a resident medical officer.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. G. W. BALFOUR, Leeds, Central) : The area and population of the parish of Errigal are correctly stated.

Medical officers are not, however, appointed for parishes, but for dispensary districts; which are not conterminous with parishes. I do not think it is correct to say that the general bulk of the people of this district are amongst the poorest to be found in Ireland. As already pointed out, the medical officer has always resided at Aughnacloy, and the distance in a direct line from his residence to the most remote points in the district is not more than nine miles. With reference to the last paragraph, I cannot add anything to my replies to the questions previously addressed to me by the hon. Member on this subject.

MR. MACALEESE: Will the right hon. Gentleman grant an inquiry into this matter?

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: No; it has already been most carefully considered.

HEAD CONSTABLE J. O'BRIEN, R.I.C.

MR. FLYNN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, will if he explain why head Constable J. O'Brien, R.I.C., Millstreet, who was ordered to be transferred to Middleton, County Cork, for a breach of discipline, as the result of a charge brought against him by ex-Sergeant M'Keever, is still retained in Millstreet; and has the transfer order been cancelled; and, if so, for what reason and by what authority.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: Ex-Sergeant M'Keever immediately on his retirement from the Constabulary brought forward a series of charges against his District Inspector, Head Constable, and others. These charges were closely inquired into, and the great bulk of them were found to be groundless and vindictive. It appeared, however, that on the occasion of the District Inspector's marriage the police of the district made a presentation to his wife and that the Head Constable co-operated with them. This action on their part constituted a breach of the regulations of the Force, and the Inspector-General ordered the Head Constable to be transferred to another station. The Head Constable represented subsequently that he would retire from the Force in September next, and the Inspector-General in view of this and other special circumstances, as well as having regard to the excellence of his past service, cancelled the order for his transfer.

THE BUTLER ESTATE, COUNTY CLARE.

MR. P. O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): On behalf of the hon. Member for East Clare I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what is the cause of the delay in carrying out the purchase by the tenants on the Butler Estate, County Clare.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: In the case of the estate of Nicholas Butler, which is pending for sale in the Land Judge's Court, a request for an inspection of the holdings under the 40th section of the Land Act of 1896 was received by the Land Commission at the commencement of the present month. When the inspection has been carried out the Commissioners will make their report under the section referred to.

IRISH TITHE RENT-CHARGE—METGE v. THE JUSTICES OF MEATH.

MR. WILLIAM MOORE (Antrim, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the fact that the decision in the case of the Queen (Metge) v. the Justices of Meath applies to prevent a revision of perpetual rents fixed under the Statute 3 and 4 Vic., c. 37, s. 142, equally with tithe rent-charge; whether this difficulty has arisen from the omission to publish in the *Dublin Gazette* since 1887 an official record of the average prices of cereals; and whether, as he has introduced a Bill to remedy this grievance in the case of the tithe rent-charge payers arising from the same cause, he can see his way to give relief, by further legislation, to the large body of tenants holding under such grants.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: The reply to the first two paragraphs is in the affirmative. I cannot undertake to introduce legislation dealing with the case of the tenants referred to during the present session.

VACCINATION IN IRELAND.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what steps are being taken in accordance with the recommendation of the Royal Commission on Vaccination to supply calf lymph to the public vaccinators in Ireland.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: Steps were taken in the first instance to ascertain

whether Dr. Blaxhall, the bacteriologist of the English Local Government Board, would be willing to make arrangements for providing a supply of glycerinated calf lymph for Ireland. I understand, however, that Dr. Blaxhall cannot undertake to supply to Ireland the quantity required, and it is now proposed to equip a bacteriological laboratory in Ireland for the purpose.

DUNGANNON COURT HOUSE.

MR. DOOGAN (Tyrone, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Sir Francis Brady, County Court Judge of Tyrone, has issued an order or given instructions that, whilst he is presiding in the Court House at Dungannon, no loaded vehicles are to be allowed to pass along the street at the side of the Court House. Whether he is aware that the only other way for vehicles proceeding up town is through Scotch Street, which is so steep as to be impracticable for horses taking up loads, and that the street which passes the Court House is the only direct way from the goods station and also the only way for farmers of a very large district coming to town with their produce; whether the County Court Judge is within his powers in issuing the order; and whether some other means could be devised, by double windows or otherwise, of protecting the amenity of the Court without interfering with the ordinary traffic.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: I am informed by Sir Francis Brady that he has not issued any order or instruction to the effect suggested in the first paragraph. It appears, however, that as it was found impossible to carry on the business of the Court in consequence of the great noise caused by heavy vehicles passing, an arrangement was made with the police by which such vehicles that could use another route should do so, other vehicles being allowed to pass the Court House. Similar arrangements have always been made in Dungannon. The County Court Judge had full authority to make this arrangement, which was necessary for the due administration of justice, and it is the duty of the police to give effect to the arrangement.

NUGENT ESTATE, CO. WESTMEATH.

MR. TUTE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ire-

land can he state the cause of the delay in completing the sale of the Nugent Estate (Donore, County Westmeath) to the tenants, the final notices having been issued by the Court of Chancery on 17th January, 1896.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: The question of applying to this estate the provisions of Section 40 of the Land Act, 1896, was before the Land Judge in March last, and on the application of the parties interested the matter was allowed to stand with a view of enabling negotiations to be entered into with the tenants for the sale to them of their holdings by agreement, and apart from the provisions of this section. It appears that, so far, the tenants have not shown any strong desire to become purchasers.

CHARITABLE LOANS (IRELAND) BILL.

MR. EDWARD M'HUGH (Armagh, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can hold out any hope to depositors that the Charitable Loans (Ireland) Bill will be passed through Parliament before the close of the present session.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: If this Bill is opposed I am afraid there is little hope that the Government will be able to pass it through Parliament before the close of the present session.

CASTLECOMER AND KILLALOE RAILWAY FACILITIES.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Government have considered the necessity of suggesting to the Great Southern and Western Railway Company the providing of transit facilities to Castlecomer coal mines and to Killaloe slate quarries in the event of the amalgamation scheme passing; and whether the Government would be prepared to give a grant in aid of those extensions.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: The answer to the first paragraph is in the negative. With respect to the second paragraph, there are no funds at the disposal of the Irish Government for the purpose.

KERRY SUB-COMMISSION.

MR. FLAVIN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that great inconvenience has been caused by a large

number of tenants in the northern portion of the County of Kerry by the fact that the Sub-Commission have not sat at Listowel for two years to hear fair rent leases, and that tenants in the Listowe district whose applications to fix fair rents were made nearly three years ago are still unheard; what is the number of tenants' applications now awaiting trial before the Sub-Commission at Listowel; and whether some steps will be taken to remedy the congested condition of fair rent applications, by an early sitting of the Sub-Commission at Listowel.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: I am unable to add anything to the reply given by me to the similar question put by the hon. Member on the 20th June, except to state that the Commissioners are unable to arrange for a sitting of the Sub-Commissioners at Listowel until the list now in course of disposal at Killarney has been finished, and that it is impossible to state, even approximately, when that list will be finished.

SCHOOL BOARD RATES.

MR. R. G. WEBSTER: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the increasing tendency of the precepts issued to the rating authorities by the school boards throughout many parts of the country, and the heavy burden thereby caused to the poorer ratepayers; if he has noticed the fact that it is authoritatively stated that the School Board for London charges for the ensuing year will be increased by 1d. in the pound, and amount to 1s. 1½d. in the pound; and if he will take legislative action to limit the expenditure of the school boards to a certain rate in the pound, and that this sum in no case be exceeded without the express sanction of the Local Government Board.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: In answer to my hon. friend I have to say that the facts as stated in the first and second paragraphs of his question are substantially accurate; but I certainly could not suggest to the House the propriety of legislation interfering with the discretion of the ratepayers in the administration of their funds.

THE ROYAL BUCKHOUNDS.

SIR WILLIAM WEDDERBURN: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury

whether his attention has been drawn to a record of the Royal Buckhounds for the past season, prepared by the Rev. J. Stratton, hon. secretary of the Humanitarian League, showing that in twenty-two out of thirty-seven hunts the deer sought refuge in houses or premises attached to them, and that in a number of cases the animal when captured was bleeding and lacerated; and whether he will consider the desirability of withdrawing the grant of public money from an amusement involving suffering to park deer, which are essentially domestic animals.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no means of verifying the suggestions of fact made in the first paragraph of the question, and I have no statement of policy to announce on the subject.

POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK—TELEGRAPHIC WITHDRAWALS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, having regard to the fact that depositors in the Post Office Savings Bank, three-fourths of whom are said to consist of the working classes, spent during the year 1898 nearly £10,000 in telegraphing to the head office in order to secure speedy payment of withdrawals rather than await correspondence by post, will he consider the expediency of enabling the Postmaster-General to issue to depositors in the Savings Bank, at a charge of 1s., commission books containing eight withdrawal orders, under which fixed sums of 10s., 15s., £1, or £2 may be withdrawn by the depositor on demand at any savings bank post-office in the kingdom on production of the deposit book and the usual evidence of identity.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I believe that this question has been answered four or five times. I have nothing to add to the answers given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and others on the subject. I think if the hon. Member will refer to the replies given on February 21, 1896, April 6, 1897, May 4, 1897, and May 24, 1898, he will find full material.

MR. WEIR: Yes, but matters have materially changed since that date, and the working classes have to pay a much larger sum now for telegraphic withdrawals.

MUNICIPAL TRADING.

MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if

the Government intend to proceed with the motion on Municipal Trading.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR : I understand that the motion for the appointment of a Joint Committee with the Lords to consider this subject will involve a considerable amount of discussion. I confess I do not see where the time for that discussion is to be obtained, and I fear also that the time is elapsing in which any useful investigation in the present session can take place. If these conditions remain unaltered, I fear there is little chance of this Committee being appointed in the course of this session.

AGRICULTURE AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION (IRELAND) BILL.

MR. ARTHUR J. MOORE (London-derry) : I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he has received a memorial signed by fifty Irish members of all sections of political opinion expressing their desire to see the Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland) Bill passed this session, and whether he can now fix a date for the discussion of the Second Reading.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR : I have received more than one memorial, from which it is clear that a very large number, I believe the large majority, of Irish Members in this House are anxious to see this Bill passed into law in the course of the present session. I have, on more than one occasion, explained to the House and to Gentlemen representing Irish constituencies that it was impossible, in the nature of things, that any very long period of time should be given for discussion on this Bill, and that, unless hon. Gentlemen were content to curtail such Debate, it was impossible that it should pass into law. If, however, the expression of the wish on the part of the Irish Members that the Bill should pass carries with it as a corollary their intention that the Debate should be of a limited cha-

racter, I am prepared to take the Second Reading of the Bill upon Wednesday next, if it be understood that there will be no important opposition made to the reference of the Bill, after the Second Reading has been passed, to a grand Committee.

CAPTAIN DONELAN : Will the Bill be put down as first Order ?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR : Yes, on the conditions stated.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs) : Can the First Lord make any further statement as to the business for next week ?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR : The Supply on Friday week will be the Votes in Class 3 of the Home Office. On Monday I propose that the first Order should be the resolution introducing the Niger Company Bill, which, I have already told the House, it is most important we should pass in the course of the present session. The second Order will be the continuation of the Report stage of the Small Houses Bill, and the third Order the Scotch Private Procedure Bill. I shall hope to put the Scotch Private Procedure Bill as the first Order on Tuesday, and the Military Works Bill as the second Order.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

(Exemption from the Standing Order.)

Motion made, and Question put—"That the proceedings on the Tithe Rent-charge (Rates) Bill, if under discussion at Twelve o'clock this night, be not interrupted under Standing Orderittings of this House."—(*Mr. Balfour.*)

The House divided :—Ayes, 263 ; Noes, 86. (Division List, No. 209).

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
Aird, John
Allhusen, Augustus H. Eden
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arnold, Alfred
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Ashmead-Bartlett, Sir Ellis
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Joceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baillie, James E. B. (Inverness)

Baird, John George A.
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Man.)
Balfour, Rt. Hon. Gerald W. (Leeds)
Balfour, Rt. Hon. J. B. (Clackm.)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barnes, Frederic Gorell
Barry, Rt. Hon. A. H. Smith (Hunt)
Bartley, George C. T.
Barton, Dunbar Plunket

Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benj.
Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Bethell, Commander
Bhownaggee, Sir M. M.
Biddulph, Michael
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bolitho, Thomas Bedford
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn)
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John

Bryce, Rt. Hn. James
 Burt, Thomas
 Buxton, Sydney Charles
 Campbell, Rt. Hon. J. A. (Glasg.)
 Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
 Carlile, William Walter
 Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
 Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh.)
 Cayzer, Sir Charles William
 Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, East)
 Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
 Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
 Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.)
 Chamberlain, J. A. (Worc.)
 Charrington, Spencer
 Chelsea, Viscount
 Clarke, Sir E. (Plymouth)
 Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
 Coddington, Sir William
 Coghill, Douglas Harry
 Cohen, Benjamin Louis
 Collings, Right Hon. Jesse
 Colomb, Sir John C. Ready
 Colston, Chas. Ed. H. Athole
 Compton, Lord Alwyne
 Cornwallis, F. Stanley W.
 Cotton-Jodrell, Col. E. T. D.
 Courtney, Rt. Hon. L. H.
 Cox, Irwin E. Bainbridge
 Cranborne, Viscount
 Crombie, John William
 Cruddas, William Donaldson
 Curzon, Viscount
 Dalbiac, Colonel Philip Hugh
 Dalkeith, Earl of
 Dalrymple, Sir Charles
 Denny, Colonel
 Digby, J. K. D. Wingfield-
 Dorington, Sir John Edward
 Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
 Doxford, William Theodore
 Drage, Geoffrey
 Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir W. Hart
 Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
 Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
 Fardell, Sir T. George
 Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
 Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
 Fergusson, Rt. Hon. Sir J. (Man)
 Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
 Finch, George H.
 Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
 Firbank, Joseph Thomas
 Fisher, William Hayes
 Fison, Frederick William
 FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
 Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmund
 Flannery, Sir Fortescue
 Fletcher, Sir Henry
 Folkestone, Viscount
 Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
 Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
 Fry, Lewis
 Galloway, Wm. Johnson
 Garfit, William
 Gibbons, J. Lloyd
 Giles, Charles Tyrrell
 Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbt. John
 Goldsaworthy, Major-General
 Gordon, Hon. John Edward
 Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
 Goschen, Rt. Hn. G. J. (St. Geo's)
 Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
 Goulding, Edward Alfred
 Gray, Ernest (West Han)

Gull, Sir Cameron
 Gunter, Colonel
 Gurdon, Sir William Brampton
 Haldane, Richard Burdon
 Halsey, Thomas Frederick
 Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord Geo.
 Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robt. Wm.
 Hanson, Sir Reginald
 Hardy, Laurence
 Hare, Thomas Leigh
 Harwood, George
 Haslett, Sir James Horner
 Hayne, Rt. Hn. Charles Seale-
 Hazell, Walter
 Heath, James
 Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
 Hill, Sir Edward Stock (Bristol)
 Hoare, Samuel (Norwich)
 Hobhouse, Henry
 Holland, Hon. Lionel R. (Bow)
 Hornby, Sir William Henry
 Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
 Howell, William Tudor
 Hozier, Hon. Jas. Henry Cecil
 Hutton, John (Yorks, N.R.)
 Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
 Jenkins, Sir John Jones
 Johnson-Ferguson, Jabez Ed.
 Johnston, William (Belfast)
 Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
 Jolliffe, Hon. H. George
 Kemp, George
 Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir J. H.
 Kenyon, James
 Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
 Kimber, Henry
 Knowles, Lees
 Laurie, Lieut.-General
 Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
 Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
 Lea, Sir Thos. (Londonderry)
 Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
 Leighton, Stanley
 Leng, Sir John
 Llewellyn, E. H. (Somerset)
 Llewellyn, Sir Dillwyn (Swins)
 Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
 Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
 Long, Col. C. W. (Evesham)
 Long, Rt. Hn. Wlfr. (Liverpool)
 Lorne, Marquess of
 Lowe, Francis William
 Lloyd, Archie Kirkman
 Lucas-Shadwell, William
 Macartney, W. G. Ellison
 MacIver, David (Liverpool)
 Maclean, James Mackenzie
 MacIure, Sir John William
 M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
 M'Crae, George
 M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edin. W.)
 Malcolm, Ian
 Manners, Lord Edward W. J.
 Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
 Melville, Beresford Valentine
 Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
 Milbank, Sir Powlett C. John
 Mildmay, Francis Bingham
 Milton, Viscount
 Milward, Colonel Victor
 Monckton, Edward Philip
 Monk, Charles James
 Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
 Moore, William (Antrim, N.)
 More, Robert J. (Shropshire)

Morrell, George Herbert
 Morton, A. H. A. (Deptford)
 Mount, William George
 Murray, Rt. Hn. A. G. (Bute)
 Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
 Myers, William Henry
 Nicholson, William Graham
 Nicol, Donald Ninian
 Northcote, Hon. Sir H. Stafford
 O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
 Olroyd, Mark
 O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
 Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
 Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb)
 Percy, Earl
 Perks, Robert William
 Pickersgill, Edward Hare
 Pierpoint, Robert
 Pilkington, R. (Lancs. Newton)
 Pirie, Duncan V.
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Priestley, Sir W. O. (Edinburgh)
 Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
 Purvis, Robert
 Rankin, Sir James
 Rasch, Major Frederick Carne
 Rentoul, James Alexander
 Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir M. W.
 Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
 Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
 Rothschild, Hon. Lionel W.
 Round, James
 Royds, Clement Molyneux
 Russell, T. W. (Tyne)
 Ryder, J. H. Dudley
 Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
 Sandys, Lieut. Col. T. Myles
 Seely, Charles Hilton
 Seton-Karr, Henry
 Sharpe, William Edward T.
 Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
 Sidebottom, T. Harrop (Stalyb.)
 Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
 Smith, James Parker (Lanark)
 Smith, Hon. F. W. D. (Strand)
 Spencer, Ernest
 Spicer, Albert
 Stanley, Edward J. (Somerset)
 Stewart, Sir Mark J. M'Taggart
 Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
 Stock, James Henry
 Stone, Sir Benjamin
 Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
 Tennant, Harold John
 Thorburn, Walter
 Thornton, Percy M.
 Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
 Tritton, Charles Ernest
 Osborne, Thomas
 Valentia, Viscount
 Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard
 Wanklyn, James Leslie
 Warr, Augustus Frederick
 Webster, R. G. (St. Pancras)
 Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
 Whitmore, Charles Algernon
 Williams, Joseph Powell (Birm.)
 Willox, Sir John Archibald
 Wills, Sir William Henry
 Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks.)
 Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bth.)
 Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
 Woodall, William
 Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
 Wyndham, George

Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Wyll, Marmaduke D'Arcy
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong

Young, Commander (Berks, E.)
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE AYES.—
Sir William Walrond and
Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, W. (Newc. under-Lyme)
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Austin, M.
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Augustine
Blake Edward
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Sir Ch. (Glasgow)
Cameron, Robert (Durham)
Carvill, Patrick G. Hamilton
Cawley, Frederick
Clark, Dr. G. B. (Caithness-sh.)
Curran, Thomas (Sligo, S.)
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan)
Dewar, Arthur
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Owen Morgan
Ellis, John Edward
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Evershed, Sydney
Fenwick, Charles
Flynn, James Christopher
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gold, Charles

Gourley, Sir Edward Temperley
Hedderwick, Thom. Charles H.
Holland, Wm. H. (York, W. R.)
Horniman, Frederick John
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)
Labouchere, Henry
Lawson, Sir W. (Cumbland)
Læse, Sir J. F. (Accrington)
Leuty, Thomas Richmond
Lewis, John Herbert
Logan, John William
Lough, Thomas
Macalessie, Daniel
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
McEwan, William
McGhee, Richard
McKenna, Reginald
M'Leod, John
Maddison, Fred.
Mappin, Sir F. T.
Montagu, Sir S. (Whitechapel)
Murnaghan, George
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, J. F. X. (Cork)
O'Connor, J. (Wicklow, W.)
Palmer, Sir C. M. (Durham)
Paulton, James Mellor

Pease, Sir J. W. (Durham)
Pilkington, Sir G. A. (Lancs SW)
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Briggs (Yorks)
Randell, David
Roberts, J. H. (Denbigha.)
Samuel, J. (Stockton-on-Tees)
Scott, C. Prestwich (Leigh)
Shaw, Charles E. (Stafford)
Sinclair, Capt. J. (Forfarshire)
Stanhope, Hon. Philip J.
Steadman, William Charles
Steven-on, Francis S.
Strachey, Edward
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Sullivan, T. D. (Donegal, W.)
Thomas, A. (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, D. A. (Merthyr)
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Wedderburn, Sir William
Weir, James Galloway
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W. R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, John (Govan)
Woods, Samuel

TELLERS FOR THE NOES.—Mr.
Channing and Mr. Broad-
hurst.

TITHE RENT-CHARGE (RATES) BILL.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment to Question [27th June], "That the Bill be now read a second time; and which Amendment was—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day three months.'"—(*Mr. Asquith.*)

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin): I rise to take part in this Debate with unfeigned reluctance. I wish that this Bill had never been introduced, and in that respect I am not peculiar even on these Benches. I also wish, it having been introduced, I could have avoided speaking upon it. But as I have come to the conclusion that I must vote against the Second Reading of the Bill, I think it is convenient, if not necessary, that I should as briefly as possible explain the reasons which have led me to that conclusion. I am fortunate in being able on this occasion to explain why I am voting against it. When the Bill was introduced

to the House, we had no opportunity of expressing any opinion on it. You, Sir, gave us the privilege of voting on the question whether the Debate should be adjourned, and I supported that motion, because I confess it appeared to me that the use of the Ten Minute Rule for the introduction of a Bill of this highly contentious character was altogether foreign to the purpose of the House when it sanctioned the rule. I do not on the present occasion intend to enter into a discussion of the propriety or impropriety of thus using the rule; if I did so you would call me to order for wandering from the point before us. But I am glad to be able to explain that I did vote for the adjournment of the Debate because I thought the rule was being abused, while I did not vote against the introduction of the Bill because I saw no reason why the Bill should not be introduced, although I was not even then disposed to look upon it with any great favour. Now we have come to the question of the Second Reading. It would ill become me to go over again the ground which was trodden by several speakers in the previous night's debate. I desire as far as possible to

avoid the repetition of arguments which have been used, so as not to trespass too long on the indulgence of the House. I think the outcome of the previous night's Debate was this, that the supporters of the Bill based their advocacy of it on the question of justice. I listened with great attention to the speech of my hon. and learned friend the Member for Stroud. He speaks, naturally, with great authority upon this Bill. He has studied the question of rating from a professional as well as a political point of view, and he is one of the members—and not the least authoritative, I believe—of the Royal Commission out of whose interim Report this Bill may in some measure be said to have originated. But whilst I listened with great attention and with great respect to what my hon. and learned friend said, and whilst I admired the zeal and energy with which he put before us the statement that this Bill was to be discussed on the ground of justice, and that its justification was the endeavour to establish equality of burden, I had great difficulty in following the arguments by which he endeavoured to substantiate those propositions. It was probably my own fault, but for some time I could not understand the method on which he was proceeding. When at last I did apprehend it I thought, if I may be permitted to say so, that he had entirely misunderstood the problem which was before us, and which had also been before the Royal Committee on Local Taxation. The root of the error of my hon. friend's argument was an error which underlay many of the arguments of other Members who took part in the Debate—it is the confusion between the rating of property and the levying of contributions from persons who constitute the community, and who are called upon to meet demands that may be evolved from the wants of the community. If it were a question of considering quite *de novo* how the wants of a parish, or of any larger area, should be met, no one would dream of setting up such a system of local taxation as now exists. It could not be defended, and no one would suggest that it should be initiated. But we are dealing with a system which grew up three centuries ago—a system which brings into contribution towards meeting the wants of the parochial community different kinds of property, and provides the machinery by which the contribution should be levied in respect of that pro-

Mr. Courtney.

perty. It is well that this distinction should be always kept in mind—not merely in regard to the smaller purposes of this Bill, but in view of much wider purposes. It is obvious it is a sound argument against the appeals for justice which the supporters of this Bill have so frequently made. Justice lies between individuals, and the organisation of the State frequently, no doubt, presents problems of justice which may have to be considered. But if we are inheritors of a policy under which certain properties have been set aside to meet certain uses by assignments long since past, we may as a nation concede the revision of those uses, we may discuss the purposes to which the money is applied, but the idea of justice in relation to the assignment is quite outside the problem. Let me suggest an illustration, which, I think, many hon. Members will concur in. Let us consider the case of tithe rent-charge itself instead of merely the rates upon it. This tithe rent-charge originated more than three centuries ago, and I think hon. Members would unite in repudiating the suggestion that any personal injustice was involved in the payment by the tithe rent owner of the sum he is required to pay. I have often heard this discussed in the country. I remember on one occasion a landowner saying to me—pointing to a clergyman—“I pay that man £500 a year out of my own pocket and yet he pays no respect to my opinions or wishes.” I ventured to suggest that the clergyman would not assent to the proposition that the money did come out of the landowner's pocket, and that he probably rested his claim on a much higher title than that of the rest of the property; that, in fact, he would say, “Your property is subject to the payment of this £500, and I have a prior title.” This is a strictly proper Conservative view of the tithe rent-charge, and how is it to be discriminated—except in comparison with its origin three centuries ago—from the question of personal incidence and the personal injustice suffered by the tithe rent owner in respect of the rates which he has to pay? He is not in possession as a freeholder of the tithe rent-charge; his only endowment is, not the whole of that which he may have the administration of, but so much of it as is left after the payment of rates. The examples which were brought forward by the hon. Member for Tunbridge the other

day, if this view of the matter be correct, will be seen to be altogether wide of the mark. He gave us some illustrations of the incumbents of country parishes where the tithe rent was of small amount and the rates were exceedingly heavy. He said that the professional man pays rates in proportion to the income he receives, and that, given the income, he considers the rates as a personal obligation to himself. Now, if my view is right, the truth is that the incumbent who is endowed is entitled only to what is left after the rates are paid. There is no personal obligation whatever upon him in respect of the payment of rates. The case is exactly the same as if the property had been severed into parts, and one part had been assigned to the use of the poor, and the other part to the use of the incumbent. This is undoubtedly what the law was in respect to tithe prior to the Reformation. The first burden of several burdens was for the use of the poor, and the ecclesiastical burden came subsequent to it. The Statute of Elizabeth in this respect only means what was the law before the Reformation. That is the law in this country and in all Christendom.

AN HON. MEMBER: No; not in this country.

MR. COURTNEY: It is undoubtedly the law in this country, as every one who has studied the subject will admit. If that be the case, what is the conclusion from the pathetic examples adduced by the hon. Member for Tunbridge—that in the endowment of the English Church as at present organised there are some endowments very small, endowments which after paying the rates are, I admit, often very small and very inadequate, and that the endowments in other cases are very large and more than adequate. Do you wish to remedy the inadequacy of the endowments of some parishes by giving them additional or new endowments? Do you advocate some such action as would cause a reorganisation of the endowments as a whole, so as to secure the removal of the grievance to which the hon. Member for Tunbridge calls attention?

*MR. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN (Kent, Tunbridge): The instances I gave were where no deduction was allowed in arriving at the rateable value, although money was paid out for a necessary

curate. This was allowed until the case of the Queen v. Sherford. This, therefore, is an entirely new obligation.

MR. COURTNEY: It may be allowed by the sanction of the parishioners, but it is not the law. The illustrations of poor and inadequate endowment which the hon. Member gave—

*MR. GRIFFITH-BOSCAWEN dissented.

MR. COURTNEY: I am sorry the hon. Member did not follow my arguments, but I may be allowed to state my own view of the position. The situation, to my mind, is precisely that which obtained in respect to the bishoprics of this country. We know very well that up to a comparatively recent time the incomes of the bishops were quite inadequate and insufficient. The Bishopric of Rochester was so badly endowed that for a long time it was annexed to the Deanery of Westminster in order to give the bishop a sufficient income. The Bishopric of Winchester was so poor that the income of the last bishop before the reorganisation had to be supplemented. The Bishopric of Lincoln, at one time the largest, and certainly the richest diocese in England, stretching, as it did, from Lincoln down to the Thames, was so shrunk in its endowments that for two centuries no man ever died Bishop of Lincoln. A man was put into it and assumed the episcopal office, but as soon as ever he could he got out again. The Ecclesiastical Commission removed all these scandals, and until we get a new Ecclesiastical Commission it is impossible to perceive how the obstacles, which are very great (including that of private patronage), which are now complained of, can ever be surmounted. There must be a reorganisation of endowments in order to cure the evils to which the hon. Member very justly called attention. But you must leave to an autonomous Church the power of correcting these inequalities. You must not come to Parliament saying in effect, "The endowments of our poorer parishes are too slight, seeing that they are endowed out of tithe rents, out of which a poor rate has to be paid, and we appeal to you to help to endow these attenuated incomes, and make them better than they are." The Bill as it stands is miserably inadequate for this purpose. The greater

the present endowment the greater the aid it gives. It is the rich endowment that does not want it that gets assistance. This eleemosynary Bill is open to the initial objection that you come to Parliament for public money instead of reorganising the revenues of the Church and providing endowments for the poorer parishes, and you propose to apply the money in such a way that the poor are still left miserably poor and the wealth of the rich is increased. The custom of three centuries has made the existing system one in respect to which the idea of equal burdens and equal justice has no application. I appeal to hon. Members who have at any time mixed much in clerical society, whether, in habits of thought and figures of speech, it is not the universal practice to admit the position I am now taking. You will hear a man say "such a man was offered a certain living; he went to see it, and found that the house and the church and the school were in such and such a condition," and then he always winds up, "and the rates were exceedingly high." The outgoings are carefully calculated in a manner which may be a little unpalatable to some of us who hear them minutely discussed. Every clergyman takes a living with the knowledge that the real endowment is all that is left after the payment of the poor rate. For the rest, it is not his, and he cannot claim to have suffered any injury in connection with it. I have said that this Bill cannot be defended on grounds of justice, nor on the plea that it is clerical assistance given from the point of view of inequality of rating. The hon. Member for Woodbridge, who is always pointed and effective in his arguments, told us the other night that he would strip this project from any connection with the Church, and that it was not clerical. If that is so, how does it come to pass, as we heard to-day in answer to a question, that there are some parishes in which a part of the tithe is held by a lay impropriator, and the other part held by the clergyman of the parish, and that both are subject to the same assessment? Are you going to give relief to one, and not to the other? The tithe rent-charge in the hands of the lay impropriator is to have none of the relief which this Bill offers to that in the hands of the clergy. I think that is wrong, if the rating of the property in both cases is exactly the same. The

alteration which you are going to make in the rating is not to meet a charge of injustice which does not arise in the matter, but in order to confer a new endowment upon the persons who are to receive this money. If you are going to upset an arrangement which has existed for 300 years, if you are going to take away in respect to the tithe rent-charge half the burden which up to this point has been a permanent charge upon it, people might say, "Why not go 60 or 70 years further back?" It seems hard, no doubt, to the incumbent of such a parish as that to which the hon. Member for Tunbridge drew our attention, that he should have the administration of certain property, a quarter of which before he enjoys the other three-quarters, is to be employed in the relief of the poor. A man with a tithe rent-charge of £120, who sees £20 go out—assuming a strong and a hard case—feels bitterly about it, and is very apt to think he himself pays the £20. For my part, when I have had to deal with incumbents, I have always felt a great hindrance in meeting that complaint. But what must he feel when, perhaps, £300 of the tithe rent-charge goes to the lay impropriator? If £300, why not £360 or £370? I know the argument as to falling back on the usages of the clergy, or tying the hands of the lay impropriators. But the argument is a dangerous one, and as a respecter of property, I argue against the motives of benevolence which are leading you astray in the legislation you propose. You are adopting principles which you will find injurious in the end. Now, in connection with the case of the lay impropriator, I want to call very particularly the attention of two of my right hon. friends on the Front Bench to the questions I should like to submit to them. One of these two I shall put as a point of law, and the other I shall put as a point of reason and argument. The point of law is this. Under the Bill, as it stands at present, you are going to give up one-half of the rates on the tithe rent attached to the benefice, but you are going to make no allowance whatever in respect of the tithe rent in the hands of the lay impropriator. Now, suppose the lay impropriator conveys £120 of his tithe rent, in augmentation of the endowment of the benefice, to the rector or vicar and his successors in perpetuity, would the tithe rent so conveyed enjoy the advantage of the remission of half

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of these rates proposed to be conferred by this Bill? That is a legal question to which my hon. and learned friend the Solicitor-General, whose name is on the back of the Bill, ought to give an answer. The question is simplicity itself. A lay improprator has £120 of tithe rent, the outgoings from which for rates amount to £20, leaving £100 in his hands. But he wishes to augment the attenuated endowment of a living, and he proposes to hand over the £120 in augmentation of that living. Will the £120 so handed over be no longer subject to the diminution of £20, but only be subject to the diminution of £10? I only wish that my hon. and learned friend the member for Stroud had deferred his speech, when he might have told us incidentally what he thought of that question. As he is silent, I will say for myself that in the event of the transfer of the tithe rent - charge—assigned in perpetuity to the benefice and for the advantage of the rector or vicar—it would become clerical tithe rent, and would carry with it the benefit intended to be conveyed by this Bill. The question is really a nice question. If the answer is “Yes, it does carry a diminution of £10,” then the tithe rent owner who assigns the £120 in augmentation of the living gives the £100 which he had kept in his own hands, and the £20 which was the amount of rates he paid; and the rector or vicar would get £110. In such a case there is no doubt that that £10 is a fresh endowment—an absolute endowment of the living. That does not come out of any consideration of past inequality; it is a new transfer, an absolute endowment from public money given in order to add £10 to the endowment of the benefice. But if the deduction of £20 is still made, then you would have this extraordinary position: an incumbent in possession of tithe rent-charge which is absolutely indistinguishable, mixed and fused together, and in respect of one portion he would be entitled to the deduction of one half of the rates upon it, and in respect of another portion he is not entitled to the deduction. That is surely an absurdity. If the answer is right, what becomes of the suggestion that you are bringing in this Bill in order to arrive at a better form of levying local taxation, for from absolutely the same kind of property you are making different contributions. I do not see how these inconsistencies have very much to

do with justice. Hon. Members laugh, and I do not wonder at it. There is a society for the express purpose of acquiring lay impropriations in order to augment benefices in parishes in respect of which the lay improprator at present receives the tithe rent. Its operations, I believe, are not on a very big scale. But it may be, when attention is drawn to it, and especially with the assistance of this Act, that they may get lay improprators to assign a certain portion of the tithe rent they enjoy, in order to augment their livings, knowing that the benefices would get also an added sum from the public exchequer. I can see no way out of the dilemma. I am addressing the second question to the Leader of the House, and no man in this House is more quick, more subtle, more prompt in detecting a fallacy, and no man is more ready in dialectic discussion. I do wish he would try and solve the dilemma, and, thanks to the suspension of the Twelve o'clock Rule, it would not be for want of time. If the turning out of the lay improprator is accompanied with a relief of half the tithe rates, then how can you avoid the conclusion that by that relief you do get, quite apart from past considerations of endowment, and quite apart from considerations of professional stipend, a new endowment added to the benefice? If, on the contrary, there is not this relief, then you set aside altogether the question of professional income on which this Bill bases its claim for support. Now, if the argument on which this Bill is founded is really substantial; if the position taken by the hon. Member for Stroud or the hon. Member for Tunbridge is accurate; if you are right in saying that after the lapse of a long time, justice is offended by the taxation of the clergy on the gross impropriation; if you are right in transferring, as the Bill professes to do, the rates from rateable property to a charge on persons; if all that is right, then the fatal answer is that the Bill does not proceed on that basis, and it does not do what your premisses would require it to do. You say there has been a gross injustice in the past; the parson has been taxed too highly.

SIR EDWARD CLARKE (Plymouth): Hear, hear.

MR. COURTNEY: I hear my hon. and learned friend the Member for Ply-

mouth say that is so. Well, injustice means that some person has got something which he ought not to have at the expense of some other person. Very well, the parson has been taxed too highly; then other contributories in the parish have been taxed too low. If that position is right, what you should do is—what a few members of the Royal Commission hinted at—to relieve the parson who has suffered from overtaxation so long, and to throw the burden on the other parishioners who have been for the same period taxed too lightly. But the Bill does not propose to do that; though that is a reasonable ground which might be put forward with confidence as a defence of the Bill, you have not proceeded on that ground. You are relieving one man of an injustice, which you say he has suffered, but not by the way of making those who have enjoyed the benefit of his suffering pay in the future what they have hitherto escaped. You are going to relieve him by making the whole community pay. Where is the justice of that? One injustice is covered by another injustice. It is a solution of a local taxation problem the most extraordinary I ever heard proposed. If you are considering the problem of how you are to raise the money to meet the wants of any particular area, and if you come to the conclusion that some of the inhabitants have paid too much and some too little, you throw the difference upon those who have paid too little. But you do not venture to do that which is honest and courageous and just in this case. You do not throw it upon the ratepayers of the parish, but on the ratepayers of the whole country. Now I come to the question of the peculiar method to which the Government have resorted in their attempt to cure what they allege to be an injustice. They have not adopted the proposal definitely made by the members of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation. They have not proceeded on the method of abatement of the taxation of the clergy. What they have done is to take the money out of the Local Taxation Account. I protest as an economist and a financier against this method of meeting the difficulty in which the Government have found themselves. They provide public money without any of those checks which are so necessary and so habitual in this House in regard to the ordinary appropriation of public money;

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and in order that its transfer should not be felt by any particular district, they impose the burden on the whole ratepayers of the country, in extenuation of an injustice which is differently measured in different parts of the country, and which ought to be met by a consideration of the different circumstances of these different parts. What they are really doing is to make the taxpayers furnish what the ratepayers would otherwise have to do, in order to create this new endowment which is to be added, not merely to the endowment of the impoverished but the actually wealthy clergy of the country. The President of the Board of Agriculture spoke of the distribution of funds under the Local Taxation Account as being often accompanied by—I think he said provocative of—waste.

***THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE** (Mr. LONG, Liverpool, West Derby): No.

MR. COURTNEY: Well, he said extravagance, and extravagance and waste are almost the same.

***MR. LONG:** I was referring to the anticipation of a surplus.

MR. COURTNEY: That does not differ much from what I said. What I understand my right hon. friend now to say is that county finance committees, in anticipation of a growing and increasing income, the benefits of which they enjoy, were apt to be a little extravagant or wasteful in its distribution. I think that justifies what I said. What can we conceive more provocative of waste than this taking away of money without a check, and without the people who provide it, having any voice upon it, and so turning the Local Taxation Account at large into something like the Irish Church Fund? The very suggestion of something of that kind shows danger. If the Local Taxation Fund is going to be made, as seems to be supposed, into a big bag, out of which you may draw money as you want it, because it is growing—because the country is getting richer—you have, in the institution of this account, in addition to all the evils we recognised before, something like the creation of another Irish Church Fund, which will be a ready prey to all Governments who want a little assistance. What have we done now?

The Irish Church Fund has to provide £200,000 or £300,000 to meet the increase of the Teachers' Pension Fund, and if by any chance a strong Government, coming back fresh from the country at the beginning of its power, should propose to take from the Irish Church Fund, which seems to be inexhaustible, a million of money in order to found a university which may be accessible to the Roman Catholics, what should we think of the enormous gift so bestowed? But what are you doing here? Why, you are giving three millions of money. £87,000 a year, capitalised, means three millions of money, and you are going to give three millions of money as a new endowment—so wastefully employed that it is not employed to meet the cases which demand attention. It is scattered abroad, the greater part of it, amongst those who do not want assistance. Now, for these reasons I have found it impossible to concur in the policy of this Bill. It may be said—no doubt it has been said—what justification has this stiff-necked fellow for not bowing, like other people, in submission to what has been proposed? My final word in respect of this matter is this: I approach this problem as a Liberal Unionist. I know that is a word of vague import. If I said I was a member of the Church of England, or even, as we used to say at Cambridge, a *bona fide* member of the Church of England, I daresay I should not use a phrase less elastic, or more elastic, or more undefined. Well, I am a Liberal Unionist, and the word has at least an historic meaning. I carry my mind back, Sir, to that period of which Lord Rosebery spoke only the other day—to the period of 1886, before the disruption which caused some of us to become Liberal Unionists and others Home Rulers. In that prehistoric time Liberals were all, of course, occupied in some measure with the problem of the Church of England. Some amongst us were Liberationists, ardent for religious equality, and determined at the earliest possible moment to disestablish and disendow the English Church. I was never one of them. I belonged to the intermediates, if I may use the phrase, who looked forward with assurance to the day in which we should have a free Church in a free State. We were not alarmed at the prospect, but we did not desire in any way to accelerate it. On the other hand, there were other

members of the Liberal Party who were then most staunch, and who remained staunch, in opposing any kind of alteration of the organisation of the English Church. There were these divisions of opinion amongst the Liberal Party before 1886, and we have, I believe, here amongst us Liberal Unionist representatives of those three divisions. Now, I confidently affirm this, that the Liberal Party, however much they differed amongst themselves in their views with respect to the Church of England, were united in this, that not one among them would dream of sanctioning an increased endowment. To that we should have been inflexibly and unitedly opposed. And I will say this of the Conservative Party, they were not very eager to make any proposition of that kind, which they knew would be hopeless of realisation. In 1876, 1877, 1878, and 1879 Mr. Selater-Booth brought in Bills which contained proposals to deal with this problem, but none of them received the favour of this House, notwithstanding the fact that the Conservative Party were in a considerable majority. Though the Liberal Party were much divided, especially on foreign questions, on this domestic question they were absolutely united, and they were supported by a certain number on the Conservative side who would all of them have resisted this endowment. Now, is there any reason why Liberal Unionists, who are merely Liberals as they were before 1886, should now, in 1899, entertain a different opinion from that which they held in 1886? As I have understood our position, we are ready to keep things as they are without alteration. We do not want to undo, neither do we feel called upon to assist in building up or in adding fresh endowments to those which exist already. Sir, why are we Liberal Unionists here? I mean, why is it that there are some seventy—("No")—are there not seventy?—well, it does not much matter—but why is it that there are some seventy who profess to call themselves Liberal Unionists instead of Conservatives? That is what I want to know. I want hon. Members, especially my right hon. friends on the Front Bench, to consider this question. Some of us, even before 1886, were returned as Liberals, and we represented constituencies which presumably, from that circumstance, apart from Home Rule, were Liberal constituencies.

But we ourselves were opposed to Home Rule, and we were supported—those of us who survived—in these constituencies by a section of Liberals, like ourselves, opposed to Home Rule, but not otherwise changed in their opinions, and who came to join a minority of Conservatives in those constituencies, and so secured a majority. The Liberal Unionists, representing old constituencies of this character, sit here to make what was a Conservative minority into a Unionist majority. And then, consider those hon. Members who have come in since. Why do the astute managers of party conflict, who select candidates to go here and there, choose or select men who are Liberal Unionists instead of men called Conservatives to go to one constituency rather than another? They don't do it if they can help it, perhaps; but that only enforces the argument. The Liberal Unionists are necessary evils. That is the point which I am endeavouring to drive home. They are selected because they can appeal to a certain number of electors who can turn the scale and elect them. I can tell you one thing about the Liberal Unionists in the constituencies who return us. They are more or less persuaded that Home Rule is dead, and it is very difficult to keep them from not slipping back into that belief. I think it is a most mischievous error on their part, but that is the tendency. What use do they make of the legislation which is now proposed? Why, they say that the Conservative Government themselves show that they think Home Rule is dead, that they can dispense with Liberal Unionist support, and they will have to dispense with it. I think that is a great danger. I am, as I say, a Liberal Unionist, and I want to preserve the Union. I think it is a grave danger, if you propose to bring in any legislation, if you are forgetful of the fact that among the supporters of the Union there is this section, large or small, which is still operating in constituencies up and down the country, which turns the balance, and will continue to turn the balance if the Union is in danger, but which will turn the balance the other way if by action such as this the Government appear to show that in their opinion danger is past. This Bill is not only wrong as a solution of the problems with which it pretends to grapple; it not only proposes what is unexampled in modern legislation—an addition to the

endowment of the Church of England—but by so doing it places the Unionist majority in peril by alienating the Liberal Unionists throughout the country, who have helped to give it its power, and as a Liberal Unionist I must vote against the Second Reading.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): I think I must congratulate Her Majesty's Government upon the declarations which have been made by a number of Members on their side as to the view which they take of the consequences of this Bill. The Government affect very much ecclesiastical legislation in this House. We had a Benefices Bill last year, and I do not know they have reason to be pleased with the consequences of that Bill. I certainly think that before they have done with this Bill they will repent of having introduced it. We are at present living under a Parliamentary régime of what may be called legislation upon interim Reports. It is a new and altogether un-Parliamentary system. You send a Commission or a Committee whom you trust to examine a large subject which deals with a great number of interests, and then you solicit that Committee or Commission to report, not upon all those interests, but to pick out some particular interest that you desire to favour, and then upon the faith of that Report you secrete a sum of money, and bestow it upon that particular interest, and leave the rest to shift for themselves. That experiment was first begun in the case of the Agricultural Rating Bill. There was a Commission appointed to consider the whole condition of the agricultural interest, and by and by a Member of the Cabinet became charged with the affairs of that Commission. An interim Report was cooked up in a hurry, and was laid upon the Table of Parliament, and on the security of that interim Report they managed to obtain a million and a half of public money—a demand which, I venture to say, if they had waited for the full Report, no man would have had the courage to make. That was the first specimen of legislation by interim Report. The Government declared what, I believe, in joint-stock companies is called an interim dividend. But when the rest of the shareholders desired to have their dividend none has been forthcoming. There are a great many subjects dealt with in that Report

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which are of interest to many classes other than those which have been legislated for, but of these we have heard nothing. They got their million and a half of money, and the interim Report has done its work. I suppose if there is any question which more deserves to be treated as a whole, on account of the multiplicity of interests concerned in it, all dependent more or less one with another, it is the question of rating. It is a question in which the party which deals with a single interest is more to be condemned than that which deals with nothing. You cannot rate one man more without giving an advantage to another; you cannot rate one man less without doing an injustice to another. It is under these circumstances that you have picked out from the Report of a Commission, appointed to consider the most complicated and important subject you could possibly refer to a Commission, a particular question, and by the aid, I suppose, of the Cabinet Minister in the chair, you get it to hurry up an interim Report, and endeavour to smuggle it through the House of Commons as a Ten Minutes' Bill. That is the way you are dealing with the rating question. I say that the system is unsound, it is most unfair to all interests except the particular interest which you desire to favour. Now that is a thing which this House ought not to sanction, and is a thing against which, I think, we are bound to protest. These interim Reports, I say, are apt to lead to injustice in themselves, and they are an injury to the interests of every subject who is not himself favoured by them. But, Sir, the financial aspect of the question, as my right hon. friend the Member for Bodmin very properly said, is equally to be condemned. The money collected by public taxation has been allotted to a special class—that is, to the relief of the ratepayers of the country. How is that dealt with? I have the very words—because they struck me so much at the time, and I have taken pains to record them—of the right hon. Gentleman who with so much ability introduced this Bill, although I must protest against his financial principles. He said :

“Under our system the local authorities, who are the spending bodies, know nothing beforehand of these increased balances that are coming into their hands.”

I suppose the Minister of Agriculture does not read the weekly account of the

revenues, otherwise he would see that the amounts coming into the hands of the local authorities are recorded every week. Therefore, they can see perfectly well whether they are increasing or decreasing. The Minister of Agriculture said further :

“This rather tends to extravagance and bad administration.”

That is quite true. The whole system tends to extravagance and bad administration. He went on to say :

“It will not throw upon any other class of ratepayers a practical burden of which they need complain.”

That is rather a curious view. Does the Chancellor of the Exchequer think that he can throw about £87,000 and nobody feel the loss of it? The ideas of the Minister of Agriculture are very grand, but in the region of finance I should rather have thought that a loose kind of accounting. But, then, he says :

“I believe that the burden will not be felt by any of those upon whom it falls. It is a burden of which they would not know were it not for the speeches of the hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite.”

Why, you have been praying for an active Opposition, and yet you imagine that you are to be allowed to smuggle through this Bill and to rob the ratepayers of £87,000, and that if you only have the amiable connivance of the “hon. Gentlemen and right hon. Gentlemen opposite,” you may succeed in doing it without the knowledge of the ratepayers of this country. My right hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition jumped up at once and told you that your expectations were entirely unfounded, and that you had no right to count upon the amiable connivance of the Opposition; and he declined altogether this—I will not say dishonest, that is rather too harsh a term—but this disingenuous proposal for the connivance of the Opposition to conceal what they are doing from the ratepayers of England. So much for the finance of the Department of Agriculture. I come now, Sir, to the finance of the real financial Department. This matter was brought under the notice of the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the year 1897 by a very powerful and influential deputation, and this is what he said to them :

“The rating of tithe-rent charge could not properly have been dealt with in the Rating Act of 1896. It stands on a different footing, and must be dealt with, if dealt with at all,

in a different way. It could not claim the kind or amount of relief given last year."

Yet when you bring in your Bill the remedy is exactly the same, just the same in kind and amount as the relief to the agricultural interest—a relief of half the rate. This Bill is in exact contradiction to the statement then made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer as to the remedy which ought to be given in this case. Then there is a remarkable statement in the conclusions of the Royal Commission to the effect that this grant, this relief, this endowment—whatever you please to call it—is to be given on account of "exceptional acute dissatisfaction." There is "exceptional acute dissatisfaction" with most of the taxes of this country; and if the Chancellor of the Exchequer is prepared to give away hundreds of thousands of pounds whenever he meets with "exceptional acute dissatisfaction" I think he will be obliged to part with the income tax at once. A more extraordinary ground on which to base a grant of this kind I never met with. The question is not whether there is acute dissatisfaction. The question is whether there is just ground for it. That is the point we have to deal with. I say nothing about the Report, which is the most charitable thing to do. I associate myself entirely with the right hon. Gentleman in his opinion of the character of that Report. It has been so completely analysed, and criticised, and smashed by one of the members of the Commission—the hon. Member for East Donegal—that it is hardly necessary to slay the slain over again; but I do think that the Commission's reading of *Magna Charta* will always remain as a monumental blunder of which a Royal Commission would have been thought incapable. What is the serious part of it is, that we have to depend upon the authors of that Report for advice as to the reform of the rating system of the country. The early part of that Report was occupied with what seemed to be a hankering after that pre-Reformation period when the clergy were treated as an exceptional class, both in regard to their submission to the law and their submission to taxation. I do not enter into that. We must condescend to come to the Reformation period, of which the characteristic was that the clergy were to be dealt with on the same footing as any other subjects of the Queen, and that the law applicable to others should be applicable also to

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them. That is the time of the legislation of Elizabeth, and of the substitution of the great Act for the permanent provision for the poor instead of that precarious provision that was in force under the ecclesiastical institutions which existed before the Reformation; and it is upon the Statutes of Elizabeth that you have to examine the character of this property and its rights and liabilities. I desire to meet the challenge of my hon. and learned friend the Member for Stroud. He said, "Meet the question of the justice of this claim. Do you maintain that the present rating of the tithe rent-charge is one that is just?" Yes; I do. The notion that it is unjust depends upon that fallacy which has been so luminously explained by my right hon. friend the Member for Bodmin just now. It was also explained with great clearness and force the other night by my hon. and learned friend the Member for Haddingtonshire. The fact is, the rate is not a rate upon the person at all; it is a rate upon the property. That cannot be repeated too often or made too clearly understood. The whole fallacy of this injustice is that you are putting the rate upon the person, and being governed by the conditions attaching to the individual; whereas the rate is upon the property. The individual suffers no injustice when he receives that property subject to those conditions. Now, I desire to deal with this matter from that point of view. Certainly I do not desire that the clergy of this country should be dealt with unfairly or harshly. I have always taken occasion to bear my testimony to the honourable and useful way, often at great sacrifices to themselves, in which they have laboured for the good of those among whom they live. I recognise the trials which they have experienced, and the carking care which besets them, due to the diminution of their incomes. The fall in prices has affected their incomes as it has affected the incomes of many other people. But the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill emphatically told us that the Bill has nothing to do with the poverty of the clergy, or considerations of that kind. He repeated that over and over again. He said that if the clergy were rich instead of being, some of them, poor, this Bill would be equally necessary, because it remedied an injustice which affected them, and the rich as well as the poor

were entitled to justice. Very well. Let us consider this question, altogether apart from the circumstances of the impoverishment of certain classes of the clergy, leaving any question of sentiment altogether out of the argument. That the right hon. Gentleman strongly insisted upon. It is rather surprising, I must say, because that is not the light in which the advocates of this measure have generally presented it to us, or in which I think they are likely to present it in other places. However, we must take it from the Government that it has no relation at all to the distress of the clergy, and it becomes therefore simply a question of the incidence of rating, and how it arises in respect to the tithe rent-charge. Now the remedy proposed in the Report is by deductions in consequence of certain charges which fall upon the clergy. It is a very remarkable fact that the Government have rejected the method of relieving the clergy by deductions, and they have taken in its place the method of relieving by a lump sum. Not one of you, even in your ten minutes, has told us what the deductions were, and ever since the introduction of this measure we have not been able to bring you to book as to the deductions upon which you rely. There is a sort of vague statement in the Report that there should be some regard to the services rendered, but as to the deductions, and the heads to which they belong, and what they amount to, we have never been able to bring the authors and supporters of this Bill to book. I followed the speech of the hon. and learned Member for Stroud. He said, "I will presently show you that this lump sum is equivalent to the deductions we claim"; but when he came to that point he never stated what deductions he claimed; still less did he show what was their amount, or that that amount constituted half the rates. Perhaps we shall hear from the First Lord of the Treasury what are the specific deductions which the Government claim; he will give us the figures as to the deductions, and show us that they amount to exactly half the rate. But, Sir, I have more to say upon this subject of deductions. It is a much fairer method of dealing with the question than that of a lump sum, because there are some cases where a deduction will apply, and there are other cases in which it would not apply at all. I will take the stipend of a

curate. Under the system of deductions, where there was no curate, there would be no deduction, but when you give a lump sum you give it equally whether there is a curate or whether there is not. Therefore the lump sum system is obviously one which is grossly unjust as compared with the system of deductions. Now, just let us consider what is the character of this property, and what is the nature of the rate which is placed upon it. First of all, it is said that it is rated upon its gross value. That is an inaccurate statement. If you look at the twenty-fifth page of the Report you will find six heads of deductions that are made from the rate. There is nothing more inaccurate than the statement that is made by Members on the opposite side of the House that the property is rated upon the gross value. Then there is a list of eight deductions which have been claimed which are not allowed. The first is the "landlord's property tax." Of course that is not allowed, because there is no landlord. How could there be a deduction for the landlord's property tax? Then the "land tax." In that very interview with the Chancellor of the Exchequer he said that the land tax was entirely out of the question as a deduction. "The liability to repair the chancel of the parish church." You might as well include the liability to repair the rector's house. "Personal services of the parson or vicar"; I will come to that directly. "Payments to curates," "payments to daughter churches," "pensions to retiring incumbents," "sums paid to the governors of Queen Anne's Bounty." The Chancellor of the Exchequer repudiated making a deduction for Queen Anne's Bounty. You might just as well claim a deduction from any ordinary mortgage; it is the money which is advanced for the benefit of the living, generally for the building of the rector's house, sometimes, I believe, also for the augmentation of small livings. Every one of these deductions which are claimed, and which are supposed to represent in the gross this 50 per cent. of the rate which is now going to be granted out of the general money of the rate-payers, has been disallowed by the courts of law; that is to say, they have been declared to be inconsistent with the Statutes of Elizabeth and that legislation which my right hon. friend has said has been in existence for 300 years. Here we have the Party opposite attacking a

principle which rests upon a tradition of 300 years, and in the interests of what? In the interests of a particular class. I do not call that a Conservative—I do not think that it is even a Liberal Unionist policy on the part of Gentlemen who sit on the Bench opposite. What is the true principle in this matter? It has been so well explained by my right hon. friend the Member for Bodmin that I shall not dwell upon it at any length. This is not a technical question at all. It is the fundamental principle upon which rating depends. The principle is that the rate attaches to the property itself, antecedently and independently of the interest of the person in whose hands that property may be. Every lawyer knows that that is a fundamental principle. I can illustrate it by a matter with which I think I was the means of compelling the House to be rather familiar in the year 1894, and that is the nature of the Probate duty. Probate duty is a duty which is paid out of property quite independently of how much goes ultimately to any individual. It is a tax upon the property itself, and is wholly independent of the condition or the interest or anything else of the person into whose hands it passes. That was established by the great and well-known case of the Mersey Docks, when the whole law upon that subject was thoroughly investigated. It was alleged, on the part of the trustees of the Mersey Docks, that inasmuch as they derived no benefit from the money raised they ought not to be rated—that rating was only applicable to parties who received benefit. That case showed that the rate was upon the property. That was followed by a case which was referred to the other day, which settled the claims for deductions. I am extremely averse to quoting law cases in this House, and I promise the House that it shall only be a few sentences. But it makes the principle of the law so clear that I think any layman will see the bearing of it. The claim was for a deduction on the tithe in regard to the stipend of a curate, and the Court said this:

“I can discover nothing, either in the words or in the spirit of the Act, exempting from liability the occupier of valuable property, merely because the property is not to be enjoyed by him or by anyone on behalf of whom he occupies, but is to be devoted to the benefit of the public.”

And the Court concludes with one sentence, which really sums up the whole of

the law and the whole sense of this matter. The words are:

“The fallacy of the argument is in confounding the rateable value to the poor-rate with the remunerative value to the incumbent.”

And yet it is upon the remunerative value to the incumbent that the whole principle of claims for deductions is founded. That is contrary to the whole law of rating. It is a claim which has no foundation at all, and if you are going to give £87,000, or any other sum, in order to depart from that rule, you are in point of fact giving away the property of other people in order that the people who ought to pay shall not pay. This applies, as I have said, to the case of curates, and equally to the case of personal service. That is the only deduction which in the report, or in any of the speeches, I can find has really been relied upon. There is vague talk of allowing something for the personal service of the curate, but that is disposed of entirely by the principle to which I have already referred. But it does not depend upon the special condition attaching to this service. It is due upon the property itself, perfectly independently of the man who receives it; therefore, this personal service deduction is contrary to the whole principle, and I do not think that the Solicitor-General will dispute that proposition. It has been said, I know, that there is some difference in the Act of Elizabeth between the clergy as inhabitants and as occupiers. (“No, no!”) I can quite excuse the hon. Member who dissents, and who has not had the advantage of a legal education; otherwise he would know that that distinction has been wiped out over and over again, and there is no foundation in law for it. As this matter has been referred to, I think it only right that I should make this statement. If personal service is to be a matter of deduction, why not the rectory in which the man lives? That is part of his personal service and necessary for his residence. Does anybody contend for a moment that, because the parson has to reside in the rectory, that is a reason why he is not to be rated? No, Sir, the argument of personal service will not hold water for a moment. But even supposing it did, I should like to know how the right hon. Gentleman would estimate the value of personal service. It is not to be the whole; it is a part. You have personal service and

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personal service. The services in this country are not all the same. There are some which are more numerous, there are some which are more ornamental, some which are most costly, and some which are more onerous than others. Are you going to take a figure of a man's services and deduct that from the rates on his property? The Government have not suggested what is to be the proper average of the remuneration of a man for his personal service. Therefore, for these reasons, the tax not being upon the person, but upon the property, I absolutely deny that there is any injustice in this case at all. Where the rate is on the property the question of justice or injustice cannot arise. It is because the Government knew perfectly well that they could not defend any of these deductions that they have thrown overboard the Report of the Commission, which recommended proceeding by deduction.

*MR. LONG: No, no. We have not done so.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Then show me anything in the Bill which provides for this.

*MR. LONG: I did not say there was anything in the Bill about deduction, but that the right hon. Gentleman is incorrect in saying that the Commissioners specifically recommended deductions as a basis of relief. The right hon. Gentleman will see that in the last paragraph of their conclusions the majority of the Commission recommended that relief should be given, and subsequently that three of the Commissioners recommended deductions as a basis.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Yes, they recommended that relief should be given.

*MR. LONG: That is so, but not by deductions.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: If so, then by what process?

*MR. LONG: They do not specify that.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: A nice Commission and a nice interim Report, which is hurried down to the House of Commons when the Commissioners have

not had time to make up their minds as to what kind of relief shall be given! I am greatly obliged to the right hon. Gentleman for his interruption. It only emphasises and italicises the criticism we have made on this Report. The only thing they have ventured to hint at is deductions, and when they come to the end of it I suppose they mistrusted their deductions, and so all they have done is to say, "Give them some relief; we don't know what, but we hope you will invent something for us." That is the Report on which you are going to take the money of the taxpayers of the country. I think the severest censure upon the Commission has been passed by the right hon. Gentleman, who has thrown their recommendations over and endeavoured to invent a lump sum to take the place of their unfounded deductions. The right hon. Gentleman, at all events, does not agree with his great defender, the hon. and learned Member for Stroud, because he is one who did recommend deduction, and he does not agree either with that great authority, Sir John Hibbert.

*MR. LONG: I did not say that.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Well, whom does he agree with? We have got this lump sum of 50 per cent. bestowed on this favoured class. It has no justification in law, and in point of amount it is higher even than most of the witnesses ventured to suggest. The secretary and solicitor of the Tithe Rent-charge Owners' Union expressed the opinion that if a deduction were made for personal services it should be at least 30 per cent. He considered that the effect of a deduction of 45 or 50 per cent. would be to induce anyone to take a lease of the tithe. Another witness proposed an allowance of 25 per cent. in the case of rectorial tithes and 30 per cent. in the case of vicarial tithes. And upon that sort of evidence the Government give 50 per cent. That is the sort of way in which the finance of this Bill has been conducted. It will be said "That may have been the law in the time of Elizabeth, but we do not think much of the times of Elizabeth, and we do not think much of the 300 years which have elapsed since then; we will make a new rating law altogether on an interim Report and in a Ten Minutes Bill." The making of a new rating law in this country is a very serious matter. It affects millions of people, not only the

rich, but the poor, and you cannot proceed too carefully and considerably in dealing with matters of this kind. This sort of attempt to hustle an interim gift to a particular class under the cloak of rating is one of the most unstatesmanlike proceedings I have ever seen attempted in this House. What is the sort of authority on which you endeavour to support this Bill? I have heard the great authority of Mr. Gladstone quoted. I think the date of Mr. Gladstone's opinion was given as 1852 or 1856. That is very nearly fifty years ago. Since that time Mr. Gladstone was First Minister several times; he was Finance Minister still more often. Mr. Gladstone was a man who was not careless of the interests of the clergy, and he never attempted to meddle with this tithe rent-charge. I venture to think that was because when he came to examine the question he had come to the conclusion that there were no grounds for interfering. Is that not a reasonable construction? Do you think that if Mr. Gladstone had been convinced that a great injustice was being done to the clergy in the matter he would not have attempted to remedy it? If you do you have a different appreciation of the character of Mr. Gladstone than I have. But that is not all. There was the Government of Lord Beaconsfield, with its great majority. During that time suggestions were made that there should be some deductions in this matter, but so little importance did the Government of Lord Beaconsfield and the Tory party attach to these proposals that with great alacrity they dropped them. Well, if that be so I think we ought to have some higher authority than any you have yet produced in this matter. Looking at this Bill, looking at the manner in which it has been brought forward, looking at the contents of the Bill, I confess I am lost in amazement to account for the genesis of the measure. The Government know very well that it is loudly condemned by their opponents. Yes, and that condemnation is audibly whispered by their supporters. I read this morning, even in one of the leading ecclesiastical journals, a condemnation of the imprudence, in the interest of the Church, of the course that the Government are pursuing. Party ties, no doubt, may compel Gentlemen opposite to support this measure, but I venture to say it will not be a hearty support. They know very well to-day,

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and they will know better hereafter, what the true public opinion is upon a new State endowment for the wealthiest religious community in the world. Can anyone conjecture under these circumstances what induced the Government to bring in a Bill of this character? I have never been able to arrive at the idea that it was a Machiavellian policy. They have been sighing and moaning and deploring for some time that they had not before them a united Opposition. I cannot help thinking that it is in order to confer upon them that blessing that they devised this measure. The process on this side of the House is complete, the division on the other side is beginning. I cannot help fancying that the Government thought that they were suffering under a dangerous plethora of superabundant popularity, and that they wanted a little depletion in order to make their system more wholesome, and therefore they introduced this Bill. They have thought it very easy to take the money out of what they derive from the death duties. That is their milch cow, from which they feed all their patrons, a fund whose inexhaustible resources they are perpetually using in order to job for their friends. Well, there is another solution of this riddle that occurs to my mind. No man who sits for six months in this House can fail to be aware that there is a party whose predominant influence on those benches considers ecclesiastical politics, and no other, which has no regard for any other sort or condition of men except those who belong to the ecclesiastical class. They seem to have the power to compel Her Majesty's Government to do what they please. They are very ably represented by a *puer nobile fratrum*, the angel to whom the Government have sold their souls, and who exact from them the uttermost farthing. I can account in no other manner for the way in which ecclesiastical legislation was forced upon this House last year and is forced upon it again this year. Last year the condition of the Church both spiritually and morally was brought to our notice, and this year a grant to the clergy is put forward. One would have thought that in the interest of the Church a prudent Government would have avoided proposing this grant. The truth is that in this matter they are not their own masters. Medical men tell us that disorders have their *sequelæ* which

are more dangerous often than the disorder itself. You are suffering to-day from the *sequelæ* of the Benefices Bill, you are likely to suffer a good deal more from the *sequelæ* of the Tithe Rent-charge Bill. Do they really believe that they are going to strengthen the Church in the affections of the people by presenting to them the Church in the aspect of this Bill, a bounty-fed clergy subsidised out of the rates? I do not know whether that commends itself to the noble Lords below the gangway and whether that is the ideal which they wish to be entertained by the nation. There will not be a ratepayer in this country who will not become aware of the nature of this proposal, and I can tell the right hon. Gentleman that the Opposition are not going to follow his advice to cover his delinquencies. The ratepayers of this country will be well aware that, contrary to the fundamental law of rating, a special exemption and a lump sum of money has been given to the clergy expressly as an equivalent for the ecclesiastical services they perform. What right have you to take a lump sum of money from the ratepayers of this country and give it as a deduction for the ecclesiastical services of a particular religious denomination? No wonder the stomach of the Liberal Unionists rise. We have heard the views of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bodmin to-night. You have put a good many straws on that camel's back. This is the last straw put on by the Minister of Agriculture. A scheme more calculated to bring public odium upon the Church from the injustice of the principles upon which it is founded is, in my opinion, impossible to conceive. They violate all the laws of civil and religious equality. You say it is a small sum, but the principle is not a small one. £87,000! Was there ever so great a birthright trafficked away for so miserable a mess of pottage? I believe there is many a true son of the Church in this House and out of this House who regards the provisions of this Bill with a sense of shame. I read in the Report of the Commission that in the year 1846 the gain to the land-owners under the Tithe Commutation Act was estimated at £650,000 a year. In 1878 it was estimated at £2,000,000 a year. Is that not a fund from which some voluntary contribution to these distressed clergy might have been looked for, without plundering the funds of the rate-

payers, most of whom, the majority of whom, are amongst the poorest class of the population? You have got your majority, and you will use it to-night. (Cries of "We will.") Yes, I hope you will. You have made your bed, and on that bed you will have to lie. This Parliament will be remembered in future times for nothing more than this, that its principal and almost its only feats have been class legislation—class legislation and gifts of public money, which ought to be appropriated to the good of all, for the benefit of privileged interests. These were not your professions at the election which returned you to power. It was not upon such grounds that you solicited and obtained the confidence of the country. You have used your powers, and you are using them to-night, for purposes for which you have no mandate. You have made your choice and we have made ours. We have resisted, and shall continue to resist to the utmost of our power, these most unjust proposals, and we shall await with confidence the judgment of the nation between a policy of class legislation and the principles of equal justice.

SIR EDWARD CLARKE: I think we are thoroughly justified in saying that after the two speeches we have heard delivered this afternoon against this Bill the whole case against the Bill has been stated. We have heard to-night all that philosophy and party spirit can suggest against this Bill. Unfortunately all the philosophy was in one speech and all the party spirit in the other. The right hon. Gentleman has just asked to what is the introduction of this Bill owing. I have no authority to give an answer to the question, but I think I can suggest to him a very good explanation, an explanation he could have found for himself in the Report of the Commission to which he has referred. The explanation for the introduction of this Bill is, I take it, that the supporters of the Government, as a body, represented to the Government that there was in all parts of the country a deep-seated and long-enduring dissatisfaction with a condition which put an absolute injustice upon the clergy of the country. This is no measure that has been forced by the Government for special purposes upon its unwilling supporters, it is a measure which has been asked for by the supporters of the Government, who, like myself, thought in the first instance

that this was a wise and just view, and we may be well content to have listened to those two speeches and to know that all that can be said against the Bill has been said. What is the case against the Bill? The right hon. Gentleman opposite flouted the Report of the Royal Commission and spoke of it with contempt, as something which should be treated by this or any Government as waste paper. Has he for a moment thought of what experience and political knowledge are represented by the names of those who signed the Report? This is a Commission not composed entirely of supporters of Her Majesty's Government, or of those whose training and habits in political life would predispose them to suggest a measure of this kind. Whose are the names appended to this Report? There is Sir John Hibbert, than whom, it will be admitted, there is no more staunch Liberal or more experienced man in questions of this description. There is the name of Hamilton, well known as one long associated with Mr. Gladstone, and trained in the traditions of Liberal administration and finance. There is Murray, the name of another private secretary of Mr. Gladstone, and certainly trained in the same school. And when I heard the right hon. Member for East Fife making a sort of appeal to the urban populations in this matter, and suggesting that the Bill was asked for only by the rural supporters of the Government, I wondered whether he noticed the names of two gentlemen put on the Commission expressly for the purpose of adequately representing the interests of urban constituencies—Mr. Clare, representing Liverpool, and Mr. Smith, representing Birmingham. But what did the Commission report?

"That the representations made to the Commission on behalf of the owners of tithe rent-charge not severed from the benefice have shown that the burden of local taxation on such owners is unduly onerous, and that sufficient allowance is not made for the fact that persons entitled to the tithe rent-charge are under a legal obligation to render services and perform duties in return therefor; that the case of owners of tithe rent-charge not severed from the benefice is based upon a ground which we believe to be fully established; that the present law, as interpreted by the Courts, works unjustly and places those owners in a much less favourable position than other owners who are also occupiers of rateable property; that there exists an exceptionally acute feeling of dissatisfaction with regard to the hardship of the law as it stands; and that,

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in view of all the circumstances, although incumbents are not entitled to be wholly relieved from the liability to be assessed for local rates in respect of the tithe rent-charge—indeed, such a claim has not been generally made by the witnesses who appeared before us—yet, pending the final recommendations of the Commission on this and other matters referred to us, the case of the parochial incumbent owning tithe rent-charge not severed from the benefice may properly be met by some special measure of relief."

That Report comes to the Government and to this House with the authority of the collective judgment of men trained in different schools, and taking different views on parts of this question, but all united in the view that a real injustice is being done. I put this case upon the plea of justice. I quite agree with my right hon. friend in charge of the Bill that this is not a case in which any appeal is made for charity. But I protest against the unfairness with which the right hon. Gentleman treated this matter, and asked us to consider the two things as if they were wholly unconnected. They are not. Justice ought to be done to all, and it ought to be the deliberate and anxious care on the part of this House to search out and remedy injustice. You cannot remedy every case of injustice; or we should probably have been dealing with the probate duties long ago. But if you find a case of manifest and grave injustice, pressing hardly year by year on ten or eleven thousand of one of the most deserving and hard-working classes in the country, surely you are bound to consider the fact that the persons who come to you for justice come to you not only asking for justice, but representing that the injustice which year by year you are allowing to be done to them is crippling and harassing and weakening them in the discharge of the highest duties! I was amazed to hear the right hon. Member for Bodmin condescend to the pitiful suggestion that this was an objectionable proposal, because the people who were rich would get more than the people who were poor. A superficial gibe like that is unworthy of my right hon. friend. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer were fortunate enough to-morrow to be able to reduce the income-tax by one-half, it would be perfectly true to say that the larger benefit was going to the richer people, because they paid on the larger incomes. But would anyone in this House suggest such a consideration, and complain that

the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not acting with sympathy and justice, because he did not make better provision for the poor than the rich? If there is a case of manifest injustice which the House can easily remedy by this Bill, the fact that besides to the poor men who are very much harassed the relief will be given on the same grounds of justice to men who do not need it so much, is no reason for withholding the relief. I will not go back on questions of law—no one is more reluctant than I am to do that in this House; but when the right hon. Gentleman speaks of the Act of Elizabeth, I would remind him that the reason why the parson and vicar were mentioned in the Act of Elizabeth was to prevent it from being understood that they were exempted altogether from the liability imposed under the Act. The tithe rent-charge which the parson or vicar has is not mentioned in that Act as part of the property which, *qua* property, is dealt with. The inhabitants are dealt with first, and the parson and vicar are mentioned among the inhabitants who ought to pay according to their ability. But, I agree, that is a matter of no consideration now, because for many years the interpretation of this Act has been so well established that it would be idle to go beyond it. The real grievance is much more recent. It dates from 1836, when the Tithe Commutation Act was passed. There is no better principle of construing Acts of Parliament than that of construing them with reference to the law as it had been declared at the time of the passing of the Acts, and that is a very important matter to be considered in regard to that. In 1830 the case of Jodrell had been decided, and that decision would have given relief to the clerical titheowner. The Report of the Commission says:

“In 1830 it was decided that the titheowner was rateable only for that proportion of the value of his tithe which the rent received by the landlord for all the land in the parish bore to the whole annual value of such land, including the profits of the tenant.”

That is to say, the titheowner ought to have taken off his assessment the same allowances as were made in regard to the other occupiers of land in the parish. Then the point is stated in terms:

“If the rent is one-half or two-thirds of the total annual profit or value of the land, the rate on all other property should be one-half or two-thirds of its annual value.”

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The intention of that decision was, and the effect of it would have been, if it had been upheld and acted upon until now, to do very much what this Bill will do. It would have relieved the clerical titheowner in respect of that share which is there suggested as being perhaps one-half or two-thirds. That case was decided in 1830, and if any lawyer had been asked in 1836, when the Commutation Act was passed, to state the law with regard to the rating of the titheowner, he would have pointed to that decision. But in 1836, not only the Tithe Commutation Act was passed, but also the Parochial Assessments Act, the purpose of which was to deal with the assessments of all hereditaments. Then a very curious and interesting thing took place. Those who represented the clergy at that time were anxious to secure for them the benefit of the law as laid down in Jodrell's case; and it was arranged with the Government, and promised by the Government, that there should be a proviso put into the Parochial Assessments Act in these words:

“That nothing herein contained shall be supposed to alter or affect the principles and proportions according to which different kinds of hereditaments may now by law be rated.”

If these words had been put in, they would have given statutory effect to the decision in the case of Jodrell. Unfortunately—though there is no explanation of the circumstance—those words were altered as the Bill was passing through Parliament; and on the words substituted the Courts, two years later, put a different interpretation.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: The words were altered by Parliament.

SIR EDWARD CLARKE: Not upon any discussion in Parliament. There is no trace found of how it came to pass that the words were differently drafted, and no one can doubt that the words in the Act were honestly intended by the Government of the day to carry out the purpose of the words they accepted. By a Parliamentary accident words were inserted which two years afterwards Lord Denman interpreted the other way. From that day to this the grievance has not been allowed to slumber. Hon. and right hon. Gentlemen have talked as if the complaint had been made just lately, and this appeal to Parliamentary generosity were

because of what the clergy of the Church of England have suffered in recent years ; but it is nothing of the kind. The grievance was complained of then, and has been complained of ever since, and when the right hon. Gentleman says that it was so long ago as 1852 that Mr. Gladstone used the strong words he did, I do not think he weakens the case for the Bill, for he establishes that the thing we now ask Parliament to remedy was denounced as an injustice by Mr. Gladstone 47 years ago. It is no answer to say that in later years Mr. Gladstone, having great authority, did nothing to redress the grievance. Unhappily, Mr. Gladstone had to work with such instruments as he had at hand in his Parliamentary action. He had among those whose support was absolutely essential to his Ministerial existence those who would have resisted a proposal of the kind, as they resist it now, as a new endowment of the Church. But the question never slumbered ; again and again it was set forth, again and again the clergy complained of the hardship, and surely now they should not be exposed to gibe and contumely because they ask the House of Commons to redress a grievance which has become intolerable. It is said this is a fresh endowment of the Church, this proposal to relieve the incomes of the clergy from burdens which are almost universally acknowledged to be unjust burdens. Well, we have quoted some opinions in recognition of this, and if there are two men belonging to the Party opposite who may be quoted as equal in authority on a matter of this kind to Mr. Gladstone and Sir G. Cornewall Lewis, then I leave the industry of hon. Members opposite to find out what they have said about it. So long as these declarations cannot be matched, cannot be controverted, cannot be outweighed by others, so long I think I am entitled to say the grievance is almost universally acknowledged and should be remedied. It is said that this is an endowment of the Church, and that the Church ought not to ask for an endowment from the State. It is said by those who are so very anxious for the welfare of the Church, it is said by these in sympathetic tones of sorrow, "How terrible a thing it is that the Church should accept this dangerous gift !" Sir, the Church is accepting no gift at all. There is no endowment, no gift. The clergy of the Church have asked, have

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clamoured, to be released from that which is an unfair burden on them, and for the House of Commons to yield to this demand and right this injustice involves no endowment, no gift of any kind. All sorts of topics have been introduced into this Debate, not indeed by the right hon. Gentleman to-night, but the other night there were constant references to the question of Protestantism and to difficulties with regard to the ministry. No one would be stronger than I in opposing and endeavouring to prevent practices of which we have complained ; but what in the world has that to do with this Bill ? To say that a clergyman in a country parish struggling to do his duty in circumstances of immense pressure that come around every man in the position of one ministering to the sick and poor, with the constant claims of others on his scanty means—to say that justice shall be denied to this man because somebody else in a fashionable church in some large town is indulging in extravagant ritualism, is surely to introduce an unworthy and irrelevant topic into this discussion. We have heard to-night an essay from my right hon. friend the Member for Bodmin on the present condition of the Liberal Unionist Party. The troubles that affect his position do not touch mine at all. I have the advantage of being supported by a good many very valuable and faithful friends of the Liberal Unionist Party in my constituency, and, so far as I know them, I think every one of them is at least as strong as I am in the desire to do justice to the Church. I have not the slightest fear of any loss of Liberal Unionist support in my constituency, nor need other Members have any fear in theirs. Then it is said by others, You are proceeding in the wrong way ; you might make some allowance or deduction upon the method proposed by Sir John Hibbert and others. Of course, the Government have considered the different ways of meeting the grievance, and anyone can see there would be great difficulty in constructing an elaborate scheme, applicable with fairness to all cases and in all places. You would have to introduce a new set of terms and deductions into the administration of the Poor Law all over the country. This would be a matter of extreme difficulty, and political science need not necessarily be applied for the scientific dealing with a matter of this kind. All the members of the Commission agree.

that something should be done at once. All their Reports recommend that we should not wait for the final conclusion of their consideration of the subject of local taxation, but should do something at once. My hon. and learned friend, with two other Commissioners, recommended the proposal of deductions, but there was another and a supplementary Report by another member of the Commission. The right hon. Gentleman said that the hon. Member for East Donegal had in his Report "smashed" the Report of the Commission.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I said smashed the history.

SIR EDWARD CLARKE: I heard the word "smashed"; indeed, it is familiar to me as used by the right hon. Gentleman. I think I have frequently heard him say somebody has smashed something or somebody else. Now, here is the Report of the hon. Member for East Donegal. He is unable to assent to some of the statements of the Commissioners, but he says:

"I am of opinion that the case of hardship which is admittedly made out would be entirely, sufficiently, and prudently met by an extension to tithe rent-charge of the provisions of the Agricultural Rating Act, 1896."

The concluding sentence of his Report is this:

"I am pleased to find myself in agreement with the majority of my colleagues in dealing with the hardship inflicted by the exclusion of tithe rent-charge from the benefit of the Agricultural Rating Act, and am in favour of its inclusion as the proper method of dealing with the grievance complained of."

This is the Report of the dissenting Commissioner who has been so triumphantly quoted. I read it as practically a suggestion of the very thing the Government are doing in this Bill. We have now the authority of the whole Commission. It is said the Government are doing wrong, though they are proceeding—if not in terms, at least substantially—to carry out the proposals of the Commission; but we are told they are taking the money from the wrong fund. The right hon. Member for East Fife said some severe things in reference to the Local Taxation Account and finance in which I am very much disposed to agree with him. There were singular incidents in relation to the Act of 1888 which appear to have had somewhat unsatisfactory results. It is an old

but interesting story, and I think much of the result was due to a want of courage on the part of the Government of the day in not persisting in a proposal because of a narrow Division on an Ascot Cup day which brought their majority down to four, but, chiefly, it was owing to the Parliamentary dexterity of the hon. Member for Louth, who sprang at the momentarily discouraged Government and forced them into a somewhat hasty arrangement which has not, I think, resulted very well. It is proposed to take money from this fund, and why not?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: The money you speak of is money from the whisky duty.

SIR EDWARD CLARKE: I am quite aware of that. Does the right hon. Gentleman think I have forgotten what the Bill was? It was the beginning of this local taxation system with which we are dealing, and which I think was very unsatisfactory. It was the beginning of the system, and the result of the system as it now stands is that local authorities do get year after year large sums, increasing in amount, and have to find a way of spending these sums. ("Oh, oh.") I do not think there is any public money spent in the country in regard to which there is more extravagance and waste than the expenditure of these sums, for the duty of spending the money in particular ways has been thrown upon people not always quite prepared for the responsibility. The effect of this will be to take this money from the ratepayers, not from the taxpayers; there will be no new taxation upon taxpayers; the grant money will be intercepted, and, instead of being distributed among the ratepayers, a fair apportionment will go to relieve the unfair burden which has been improperly put on one class. Now, I confess I think, both in the substance of its proposals, and in the method of carrying them out, this Bill is a good Bill. I am quite sure it will be received with satisfaction, not only by the 10,000 or 11,000 clergymen to be benefited, but by the populations among whom they are working, and who have seen the hardships from which the clergy are suffering. They will be glad to see them relieved, and I am glad to think that there is no real division on this side of the House among the supporters of

the Government, either as to the wisdom of the proposal, or as to the excellence of the means by which it is proposed to carry it out.

SIR JOSEPH PEASE (Durham, Barnard Castle): Nobody who has known the history of the tithe or of Church rates but must have heard of the bringing in of this Bill with considerable pain. It seems to me that it will revive the controversies which prevailed in my youth between the Church and Dissent on a very paltry issue, and for a very small sum of money involving the great principle of the increased endowment of the Established Church of England. The manner of bringing in this Bill everyone in the House, on whatever side he sits, must have felt was most unfortunate. A Bill involving great principles in which vast masses of the people in this country are interested was brought in under a rule and under circumstances, as already described by the right hon. Member for Bodmin, never contemplated when the Standing Order was passed, and which I think the Government must already regret. Again, this Debate, involving the religious feeling of the country, is being pressed forward to a Division, under the abuse of another Standing Order. This is a great stretching of the Standing Orders, which I see with very great regret; because whatever Party is in power, the feelings of the other side of the House ought to be taken into consideration before the Standing Orders are stretched as they have been. This Bill is looked upon, and will be looked upon still more in the future, as a direct additional endowment of the Established Church. Now, the Established Church is already greatly endowed by the State. Its schools, without any local control whatever, are receiving something like two millions sterling per annum, and two years ago another endowment of £400,000 was placed on them, while the cities and boroughs on that occasion received no help whatever. My right hon. friend says that this Bill is an act of justice; but I say there is no act of justice to the clergy which gives to the rich a larger sum of money than it gives to the man in the same position of life who is poor. It was the same with the Agricultural Rating Act. The poor landlords who had lost their rents in Wiltshire, Hampshire, and

other districts were rated on the decreased rent.

AN HON. MEMBER: The farmers were.

SIR JOSEPH PEASE: The farmers, then—their land was rated at the low rents, and they got some relief; but in my own district, where the rents had risen from 10s. to 20s. per acre, they also got relief. I say the principle is not a principle of honesty, but a bad principle. If there is distress which Parliament must relieve, let the grant go to those who are in distress, and not to those who are not in distress. The Bill is a clumsy Bill, and on that ground alone it ought to be repudiated. I view with very great suspicion these little bye Reports which come on when occasion requires them to meet the views of the Government. The question of local taxation, of which both counties and boroughs complain, arose in an acute form after the Agricultural Rating Act. These doles and piecemeal dealings have a tendency to make the local taxation of the country worse. Before legislation on the subject, the whole question of taxation, as affecting both the towns and the country, as well as the 11,000 clergymen whom this Bill affects, should be before Parliament and the country. I belong to a long pedigree of those who declined to pay Church rates and tithes, because they objected to national money being taken for the endowment of one section of the Christian Church, and on these grounds they were distrained upon for tithes. Long after the Act of 1836 they also refused to pay rates or tithes, because they believed that it was contrary to Gospel teaching. Large numbers of Nonconformists still look upon it as an act of injustice that one section of the Christian Church should receive national property, more especially when there is no longer harmony in the Church. What, after all, will this Bill do? A calculation has been made that on the average the clergy will receive £8 each. I know a good many who will get no more than £2, but others who do not require it, will receive from £8 to £10; and yet that is called an act of justice to the clergy! I am exceedingly surprised that the President of the Board of Agriculture should come here and minimise these points. There seems to be a desire merely to relieve a certain class, and to do a great injustice to those of us

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who believe that no further endowment of the Established Church should take place. The Bill has been brought in in a manner most unusual, and very dangerous to the best traditions of this House. Whatever may be said as regards justice or injustice, money is to be taken from the taxation not of the Church people only, but of the whole community, in order to endow the Church of England. That money has not been foolishly or unwisely spent by the Charity Commissioners, who have done an enormous amount of good with it in their districts. There are, however, some items of comfort in this measure. I am one of those who believe that it will hasten the day when the Church of England, disestablished and disendowed, will, freed from its fetters, teach the pure doctrines of Christianity to the great advantage of this country and the world.

MR. JAMES KENYON (Bury, Lancashire): I have read very carefully the interim Report of the Royal Commission presented to this House, and I quite agree with what has been said in regard to the injustice of the rates on the tithe rent-charge. It was the unanimous opinion of the Members of the Royal Commission that great loss had been sustained by the lowering of the prices of agricultural produce, and that the distress of the clergy was due to that. The average price of British wheat, barley, and oats, per imperial bushel, was for the seven years preceding Christmas, 1835: Wheat, 7s. 0½d.; barley, 3s. 11½d.; oats, 2s. 9d.; for the year 1894: Wheat, 2s. 10½d.; barley, 3s. 0½d.; and oats, 2s. 1½d.; and for the year 1898: Wheat, 4s. 3d.; barley, 3s. 4½d.; and oats, 2s. 3½d. At the very lowest prices of wheat the 4lb. loaf sold at Spalding at 3d., and the chairman of the Co-operative Stores at Bury says that flour was sold at half the price of the early days of the institution. Two items are not in the tithe—wool, which is half the price it was ten years ago, and milk, which at the present moment is delivered at Kentish Town from Derbyshire at 1½d. per quart. The result of this fall in the prices of agricultural produce, on which tithe rent is based, during the twenty years from 1875 to 1895 is that 2,100,000 acres of arable land in this country have gone out of cultivation, and have been turned into pasture land. The farmers have suffered from the low prices,

and the tithes rent owners have suffered; but who are the people who have had the benefit? It is the ratepayers and the taxpayers in the towns. I represent an urban manufacturing constituency, and I believe that they are quite willing to have this injustice to the tithe rent-charge owners remedied. And I am certain that the farmers of the country would not have objected to the clergy being brought under the Agricultural Rating Act of 1896. It is an important matter to the dwellers in towns that they should be able to live cheaply; and they have lived cheaply during the last twenty-five years. But it is important, also, that we should get our food supply in this country, and not allow the arable land to go into pasture. But there is another way of looking at it. The working men in the towns are not at all anxious that the workers on the farms should come into the towns to reduce wages. What difference does the Agricultural Rating Act make to the ordinary £10 householder? Only 2s. 6d. a year; and this Tithe Rent-charge Bill will only cause an additional penny, making a total of 2s. 7d. It will pay the townspeople to hand that over to keep the agricultural labourers from coming into the towns. There is another point which should tell very considerably with the employers of Lancashire and Yorkshire, and other people who have invested their capital in mills and manufactories, and who are interested in the workpeople being supplied with cheap food. When the farmers of this country are prosperous they improve the home trade. There has been a good deal of talk in this House about the trade of China. I do not wish to underrate the importance of that trade, but the home trade is worth several Chinas, and I think the Government did a sensible thing when they brought in the Agricultural Rating Act of 1896, and this Tithe Rent-charge Bill. During the years these Acts have to run, the British farmers will have time to see whether they can compete more effectually with the foreigners who are sending agricultural produce to this country. One thing has struck me since I have had the honour of coming to this House. It is that the "drum ecclesiastic" seems to arouse more feeling than anything else. As soon as the tithe rent-charge is spoken of the cry arises, "Oh, the parson!" I hope this House will treat the parson as fairly as anybody else. My constituents,

I believe, do not trouble their heads very much about the parsons, either Church of England or Nonconformist. They look after their pockets and what will best serve their own interests. I have consulted many of them, and I do not think I was blamed once for voting for the Agricultural Rating Act in 1896. I look upon this Bill as a corollary of that Act, and I think that it should have been made one of the provisions of that Act.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): The hon. and learned Member for Plymouth rests the case for this Bill mainly upon the Report of the Royal Commission, and for the twentieth time the name of Sir John Hibbert has been brought in in support of it. I am somewhat weary of these reiterated references to the authority of Sir John Hibbert. Many of us remember him, and all who knew him entertained a most sincere regard for him. But really, it is hardly ingenuous to cite Sir John Hibbert as being in favour of the Bill before the House. He was nothing of the kind. The fact is really the other way. Sir John signed a special Report which looked for a remedy in quite a different direction—that of reducing the rateable tithe rent-charge by deductions. In other words, Sir John desired to treat the matter as a question of assessment, while the Government have elected to treat it as a matter of rating, which is quite a different thing. The hon. and learned Gentleman said that the introduction of this Bill had nothing to do with the sufferings of the clergy. Why, then, is this Bill being rushed upon us?

SIR EDWARD CLARKE was understood to say that the sufferings of the clergy might be a reason for pressing forward the Bill this session.

MR. PICKERSGILL: Then I rather misunderstood the right hon. Gentleman with regard to that. I accept, of course, the statement he has made. But although I shall not be able to press this view of the case as against him, I think I can press it as against another hon. Gentleman who has spoken in this Debate, and who speaks with some authority, because he is, I believe, the secretary of the so-called Church Committee, which has banded itself together to look after the special interests of the

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clergy. I refer, of course, to the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Tunbridge Division of Kent. The hon. Gentleman said with regard to the proposal of this Bill that as a dole it is beneath contempt. Well, Sir, I quite agree that when £87,000 is divided up in the ridiculous way prescribed by this Bill among 10,000 or 11,000 participators, the share of those who most need help will indeed be beneath contempt. But the benefit to the individual is by no means the measure of the loss to the community. And here, at all events, I must join issue again with the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth. I think the House will hardly endorse the sweeping criticisms which he passed upon the local bodies throughout the country in regard to the manner in which they use the grants from the Local Taxation Account. I have had some experience of local bodies, and I venture to say that the money which comes to them from the Local Taxation Account is for the most part wisely expended in the public interest. Now, this £87,000 is at the present time distributed in this way amongst the public authorities throughout the country in fairly large sums, and it is, I submit, very usefully employed in technical education and in other ways. Well, that work will be stopped, or at least checked, if this money is diverted, and I submit that the money will be simply wasted, either by being given to those who do not need it, or, on the other hand, being given to those clergy who, as we know and regret, are in such severe straits, that the gift of such a beggarly sum will be doing little more than adding insult to injury. I think there are, not only on this side of the House, but also on the other side, some who feel that this money will not be distributed so as really to do anything to meet the necessities of the case. I hold in my hand a copy of a letter, which has appeared in the public press, addressed by one hon. Gentleman opposite to a correspondent. I refer to my friend the hon. Member for Hornsey, who says, writing to a correspondent with regard to the proposals made in this Bill:

"I should prefer that the relief given should be extended in great measure, if not entirely confined, to the poorer clergy, whose necessities are severe."

I think there are some hon. Gentlemen, at all events on the other side of the House, who entertain similar opinions, but

who, perhaps, will not express them with the same frankness which my hon. friend the Member for Hornsey has shown. The hon. Member for the Tunbridge Division last night said that this was a question of assessment: but if so why does the Bill treat the subject as a question of rating? In support of his contention he proceeded to say:

“Under this Bill the relief given to the clergy is contributed by other ratepayers.”

That is a jugglery with words which is almost worthy, if I may say so without offence, of the President of the Board of Agriculture. It is true that the relief to the clergy is contributed by other ratepayers, but what other ratepayers? Not the neighbours of the clergyman who is relieved; not the fellow ratepayers of the clergyman in the same parish or in the same district. That would be too flagrant, and would never be tolerated. But the burden is imposed on a different body of ratepayers, and perhaps I shall show that best by referring to the case of London. I am a London Member, and am naturally disposed to regard this question especially from a metropolitan point of view. Now, Sir, let me briefly put before the House what the case of London is so far as this Bill is concerned. But first, let me say that this Bill is the last—well, I will not say the last, because if the Government have rope enough, I daresay it will not be the last, but at all events the latest—of a series of Bills by which the metropolis has been particularly hard hit. I shall refer, of course, only to Bills which are strictly analogous to the present Bill so far as the metropolis is concerned. Take, for instance, the Agricultural Rating Act. How was London affected by the Agricultural Rating Act? The share which London had to contribute under the Agricultural Rating Act may be fairly estimated at £375,000. And what does London receive back? The total amount is £5,245 15s. 2d.—a very magnificent dividend! Then, again, under the Voluntary Schools Act, the contribution of London may be estimated very fairly at £120,000, and London receives back £44,000. Lastly, under the Necessitous School Boards Act the contribution of London is about £20,000, and the return is nil. I now come to the Bill before the House, and the way in which London will be affected by it. In the first place, I

will take the City of London. With regard to tithes the City of London is a peculiar case. The tithe in the City of London was settled more than 300 years ago by a decree made under the authority of an Act of Henry VIII. and since that time other commutations have been made. But the City of London, so far as the enormous majority of its parishes are concerned, never came under the Tithes Commutation Act of 1836, and, as a matter of fact, the payments which are made in lieu of tithes in the City of London are not rated, with the exception of a few parishes, which for the present purpose I may disregard. So far, therefore, as the City of London is concerned, in an enormous number of its churches the clergy receive absolutely no benefit under this Bill. Secondly, with regard to the metropolis outside the City. That case is different from the case of the City. We must, however, remember that a large part of London was built over before the 1836 Act. Before the Commutation Act, land was built over which ceased to be divertible. There remains the large and not inconsiderable part of London which has been built over since 1836, but I should think there could be no dispute that the clergy in the metropolis are supported to a very small extent indeed out of the tithes. Take the East End of London, with which I am particularly associated. I should say that the number of clergy in the East End of London supported out of the tithes to any extent is most insignificant. I believe that a very large number of churches in the East End of London were endowed under what was called the Bishop of London's fund, and others have been endowed by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. But, as we know, tithe rent-charge in the hands of Commissioners receives no relief under this Bill, and therefore the advantages which will be gained by the metropolitan clergy by this Bill will be very small indeed. I have not been able in the time at my disposal to ascertain what the amount is, but it has been estimated at £1,000, and I should not think the relief which under this Bill will go to the metropolitan clergy will be largely in excess of £1,000. Let me turn to the other side, and see what London will have to pay. That is very easily calculated. The amount which London will have to pay under this Bill bears the same proportion

to £87,000 which London's share of the estate duty bears to the total amount of that duty paid in to the Local Taxation Account for England. If that is worked out by the simple rule of three, the result will go to show that £20,000 is the annual burden which this Bill will impose on London. Thus £20,000, which might be spent on technical education, will be diverted entirely from the metropolis in any shape or form so far as 19-20ths of it are concerned, and will simply constitute, on the part of the people of London, a dole to the country clergy. It does not particularly concern me to refer to the case of other towns. But what I have said as regards London applies *mutatis mutandis* to most other large towns. Take, for instance, Manchester. I believe a very large number of clergy in Manchester have been endowed out of what is called the Manchester Capitular Revenues. I daresay these revenues consist to a large extent of tithe rent-charges, but then, as we know, tithe rent-charges in the hands of such bodies are exempted from this Bill, and so it would appear that the Manchester clergy will receive very little benefit under this Bill. Before I sit down I desire to say just a word as to the bearing of this Bill upon wider issues. The position taken up by the advocates of the Bill is that a tithe rent-charge is not income from property in land belonging to the Church, but a mere salary paid by the State for services rendered. It was said again and again by the representatives of the clergy before the Royal Commission, "no body of men ought to be rated on their professional incomes; we object to being rated on pay for work." Well, I have no unfriendly feeling towards the clergy, but I must say that I am amazed that hon. Gentlemen opposite, who hold themselves out as the special champions of the Church, should be so blinded—if I may say so without offence—by the mere purpose of the moment as to be eagerly trying to reduce the great historic position of clergymen of the Church of England to that of mere receivers of a salary. The claims which are now made on behalf of the clergy are absolutely impossible unless either, on the one hand, you revolutionise the law of rating in this country, or unless, on the other, you depose the incumbent of a parish from his ancient and historic position. The clergy want to have it both ways, but that is impossible. The in-

cumbent of a parish cannot at once retain the dignity and the security which attach to the position of one who is the owner of a freehold interest in land, and at the same time enjoy the immunity of their Nonconformist brethren who merely receive a salary in return for services rendered. This Bill, if it passes, will have very far-reaching results. It is a proposal to supplement the incomes of the clergy by money taken directly out of the pockets of the people. It will give an enormous stimulus to the cause of Disestablishment in this country, and Liberationists may quietly smile while they see the noble Lord the Member for Rochester, the other noble Lord the Member for Greenwich, and the hon. Member for the Tunbridge Division zealously but all unconsciously sawing through the branch of the tree which supports them.

*MR. J. H. JOHNSTONE (Sussex, Horsham): It seems to me that the general tone of this debate has been more fitted for the other House when sitting as the supreme Court of Appeal in this kingdom than it is for the House of Commons, for apart from that zeal, which is not always according to knowledge, and apart from the harangues which we have so often heard on Liberationist platforms, and which we are hearing over and over again this evening, the matter has been treated as almost a pure and simple question of law. We have heard again and again hon. Members of the Opposition benches telling us that the law has been settled for so many centuries, and therefore it ought to remain what it is. I think that argument is extremely useful, because the foundation of our case is that the law being what it is, unjust and unequal, those who complain of the grievance under which they suffer must needs come to this House for that redress which they cannot get in the courts of the realm. The finding of the Commission is that the law as at present interpreted by our courts works injustice. They say that that point is fully established, and I think in dealing with this measure there are only two points worthy of consideration—one is whether the conclusion of the Commission is justified, whether their finding is established by the facts set out in their Report; and the other is, is this the time to remedy the inequalities, the existence of which they say has been fully

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established? I do not think it lies within the mouth of this House to say that an injustice and inequality does not exist. More than two years ago, on the 23rd May, 1897, this House, by a sufficient and substantial majority, declared its opinion that the burdens of local taxation borne by the clergy were inequitable and excessive, and that the grievance was one which called for substantial relief. That was a resolution passed two years ago, and, turning to the report of the Royal Commission, I think that we must see that the grievance is one of long standing. It was a hardship of which the clergy have had just reason to complain ever since the very inception of rating itself, and the inequality which they originally suffered from was intensified by the Parochial Assessment Act of 1836, as interpreted by the law courts. The injustice, which is recognised by the Royal Commission, is the foundation of the Bill now before the House, and I am quite content to take my stand on that foundation. When the Commissioners find that there is no other class which contributes so large a proportion of their income to local burdens as the beneficed clergy I think the justification of this Bill is fully and completely made out. Let me illustrate this by the case of a parish with which I am familiar. The population is 1,300, and the acreage 12,000, there are two churches and three schools. The clergyman is a man of education and ability, and was a contemporary of my own at the university. The gross income of the benefice is £357, and the net income which he is able to put in his pocket after paying necessary charges upon it is £166, and the amount of local taxation upon that net income of £166 is 7s. 9d. in the pound. I think that is sufficient to show how real and how genuine is the inequality of which the beneficed clergy with good reason complain. I can never regard the income of the clergy as a professional income—I cannot say that that which does not depend upon a man's health and popularity, and ability and effort can be considered as professional income in the same sense as the income of the professional classes—but at the same time I cannot help being struck with the great contrast between the position of the lay improprator of tithes and the clerical owner of tithes. The lay improprator may live where he likes, he may undertake any other employment which he

likes, he is put to no expense in earning his income except the trifling expense of collecting it; whereas, on the other hand, the clerical owner is bound by the law of the land to render certain services, to live in a particular place, and do a certain work, and yet he is assessed on exactly the same basis and to exactly the same extent as the other man, who does nothing whatever to earn his income. I think I have established the point that there is injustice and inequality in the present rating of the beneficed clergy, and if I have not done so I will call one further witness—the hon. Member who signs the memorandum at the end of the interim Report, in which he dissents from almost every line of his fellow Commissioners' Report. But even he says that rates form a charge upon the gross income of the beneficed clergy, where all other classes are rated upon the net annual value of their occupation, as measured by the rental, less certain deductions and that in itself constitutes a real and substantial grievance. The Bill is inconclusive, because, pending the final Report of this Commission on Local Taxation, I do not think the Government or anyone else can pledge themselves to this as a final solution of the difficulty. I say the Bill is temporary and inconclusive. I frankly admit I think the greatest part of its importance arises from the vehemence of the opposition with which it has been received. But for that it might be considered a small thing. I do not indeed think it ought to provoke that opposition, because it adopts one of the most cherished principles of the benches opposite—the interception of an unearned increment. A portion of the money coming to local bodies without effort, labour, or question on their part is intercepted and used for other purposes, thereby carrying out one of the cherished doctrines of the Opposition. (An hon. Member: "For the whole community.") An act of justice is for the benefit of the whole community. Sir, the question is whether this is the right way of dealing with this—dealing with it on an interim Report of a Royal Commission. The House has accepted that course before in passing the Agricultural Rating Act of 1896, an Act which I very much doubt if this or any future House will attempt to repeal. The same reasoning is equally applicable to this measure. The tithe rent-charge has for most purposes long been considered as land. The

clergy very deeply felt their exclusion from the Agricultural Rating Act of 1896. I have thought, and I have not hesitated to say, that I considered that exclusion was inevitable because the Report of the Committee on which that Bill was founded did not deal with the clergy but with the farming community. I do not think the clergy could have been included in that Bill. But I cannot appreciate the reasoning of those Gentlemen who say that because the case of the clergy was not dealt with in 1896 it ought not to be dealt with by a separate supplemental measure at the present time. Their position has been altered for the worse, if slightly so, by the passing of that measure, and I think we shall be justified in accepting the conclusion of the hon. and learned Member who said that the case of hardship which had been made out would be prudently and sufficiently met by the extension to tithe rent-charges of the provisions of the Agricultural Rates Act of 1896. The only question, it seems to me, that can be raised at all is whether we shall deal with the subject now or wait for the Report of the Royal Commission as a whole—wait until it goes through the long process of report and consideration, of compilation and digestion, and then of final legislation. The precedent of the Agricultural Rates Act is against that course, and when I consider the enormous opportunities of dilatoriness which our Parliamentary system puts in the way of dealing with any single subject at one and the same time, I think the Government acted wisely and rightly in dealing with the measure at the present time in the present way. For a long time the clerical tithe-owner has had nothing but sympathy. I am glad to think the Government have felt the necessity and have had the courage to deal with this matter. I know it will be largely capable of being misunderstood, misrepresented and misinterpreted, and I honour the Government for having the courage and pluck to deal with a subject which has so long been waiting to be dealt with. I believe the clergy will receive their proposals with gratitude, and the electorate of the country will acquiesce in them as an act of simple, fair, necessary justice which has been too long delayed.

*MR. LOGAN (Leicester, Harborough): I do not regret the introduction of this Bill. I shall leave that to the hon. Gentlemen opposite. The long-suffering

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taxpayer only needs this last straw to make him realise the kind of class legislation which the Government is constantly imposing upon him, who has to bear the burden of taxation. They will soon realise that the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India was more frank than judicious when he said a short time ago that the policy of this Government was to look after their friends. When the Government said they were the true friends of the toilers of the country they laid claim to a title to which they had no right whatever. Ever since they have been in power they have session after session lined the pockets of their political friends at the expense of the great mass of the taxpayers of this country. I have no objection to their looking after their friends so long as they do it at their own expense, but what I object to is their doing it at the expense of the taxpayers. Previous doles have been proposed on the pretext that they were for the benefit of the country. But this is a Bill in the interests of the clergy of the Established Church of England, and the relief is said to be necessary because the clergy are so miserably poor: but looking at the great wealth in the hands of the Churchmen of this country it is a standing disgrace to them that the clergy should be in the condition in which they are at the present moment. If poverty is to be urged as a reason for relieving people of their just burdens I presume that the Government will later bring in a measure for the relief of the agricultural labourers and Civil servants, and those three out of seven of the entire population of this country who are on the verge of starvation. It cannot be contended that it is right to relieve those who are among the least poor of the community at the expense of those who are bordering on pauperism. The excuse that the burden of finding this money will not be felt is a very paltry one, because it is simply impossible to give away £87,000 without those who have to find it feeling it. We are told that this Bill should be passed as a measure of justice, and the pretence that is made is that the tithe-owner is hardly dealt with by having to pay rates on his tithes. Now that has been shown to be fallacious, and it can be shown that the tithe-owners are now receiving a larger proportion of the profits of the tithe than it was ever intended that they should receive. Mr. H. A. Farquharson, examined by the

Royal Commission who sat upon this subject in 1894, said :

" I submit that the tithe all over England is very much higher than it was ever intended to be by the Tithe Commutation Act. I am speaking of the seven years preceding the Tithe Commutation Act, which, I think, was 1836. The consequence was that they (the Commissioners) made enormous additions to the par value of the tithe in order to enable the tithe-owner to pay rates in future. Take the instance of a tithe-owner who said, 'the net value of my tithe has been £100 on an average for the last seven years, and the rate in the parish on an average of the past seven years has been ten shillings in the pound.' The Tithe Commissioners said, 'Very well, your par value in future is £150, that is £100 to give you your old net value, and £50 with which to pay those rates.' But the moment that the new Tithe Act came into force the new Poor Law came into force, and the rates which had been ten shillings in the pound went down to half-a-crown in the pound. The consequence was that this tithe-owner, who ought only to have had £112 10s.—that is £100 for himself and £12 10s. for the rates—got £150, leaving him £137 10s. for himself and £12 10s. for rates. The same witness instanced a parish in which the Commissioners added 19s. in the pound for payment of rates."

He went on to say :

" I believe that the high tithe is nearly always caused by the enormous additions made by the Tithe Commissioners for rates."

In a Return which Mr. Farquharson furnished to the Royal Commission on Agriculture relating to thirteen parishes in Essex with which he was acquainted, he showed that in 1893, when agriculture was at its worst, those thirteen parishes overpaid the tithe-owners £1,926, or 37½ per cent., on account of the enormous allowance made by the Tithe Commissioners on account of rates. Sir Robert Giffen, whose authority will not, I think, be disputed in this House, told the Royal Commission on Agriculture that "tithe now is, I do not say a larger share of the gross produce, but it is a larger share of the net produce than it was in 1836." Mr. E. P. Squarey, of the great firm of land agents (Messrs. Rawlence and Squarey), told the Royal Commission, whilst there had been a great fall of tithe between 1879 and 1894, the fall in tithe had not been commensurate with fall in the actual produce of the farm. I will suggest a solution to the Government with regard to this matter. It seems to me that the provision made for these rates in 1836 was ample, and I would suggest that the Government should deduct from the tithe rent-charge the

amount that was added in 1836 for the purpose of enabling the clergy to pay their rates, and that we should then allow the tithe rent-charge to go free of rates altogether. That is a fair bargain for the land and would be a fair settlement of this question. If the clergy believe in the justice of their claim, they will gladly accept that suggestion in preference to the proposals in the present Bill. Under the circumstances, I think no case can be made for those proposals. I do not, as I have already said, regret the introduction of this Bill, because it has enabled the Government to reopen this question, and we, before it is closed again, shall endeavour to make the people realise that the tithe is the nation's reserved interest in the land, to be disposed of as Parliament thinks fit. In the past it has been devoted to the purposes of the Church, on condition that it paid its rates and taxes ; but now the clergy seek to get rid of their part of the bargain we shall be amply justified in reopening the question. The tithe is an enormous burden on the country, and it is one of the main reasons why our farmers are unable to compete with foreign nations, and we may find it necessary to shift that burden off the land and leave Churchmen to maintain their Church in the same way that other denominations do. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer instanced two of his farms on which tithe and land tax were nearly equal to half the gross rent, and we know that land tax formed a very small proportion of that. A witness from Cambridgeshire said : "In some cases in my parish there is 12s. an acre tithe." A witness from Hampshire gave evidence that a farm of 640 acres in his occupation was paying £212 per year for tithe. A witness from Huntingdonshire said he was holding land at 12s 6d. an acre, on which the tithe was 9s. an acre. A witness from Somersetshire said there was a lot of land within three miles of him which was uncultured because the tithe came to more than the land was worth. I intend to vote against this Bill, because there is no doubt that this £87,000 will ultimately have to come out of the general taxation of the country. You may take it for the moment out of the local taxation of the country ; but the local taxation is fed by the general taxation of the people of the country ; and though, no doubt, many of the clergy are poor, as compared with

the millions of people among whom they live, and who will have to contribute towards this relief, they are in comfortable and affluent circumstances. This Bill is a gross piece of class legislation, providing for the few fairly well off at the expense of the many. It is such a Bill as, in my opinion, should not commend itself to Members of this House.

*MR. PURVIS: (Peterborough): I wish to say a few words at once as a Liberal Unionist in reference to what fell from the right hon. Member for Bodmin. I am amazed that he should speak as if he were the mouth-piece of the Liberal Unionist Party. We are old friends, and have fought together—he for me in my constituency and I for him in his, during that ten years' Trojan war against Home Rule, in which we overcame our hon. friends on the other side. But I have had something to do with the organisation and work of the Liberal Unionists from the very first until now, and the last thing I should have thought of was to hear my right hon. friend talking as the mouth-piece of the Liberal Unionists. He certainly is not; and I hope and believe that they are quite ready and willing to help the Conservative Unionists to do anything which is found to be an act of justice to anyone. The arguments for and against this measure have of necessity been of a somewhat legal and technical character, but drawn from these arguments are certain plain conclusions on which lawyers and laymen alike will, after all, give their Votes for or against the Bill. I shall try to state those on which I shall vote as a Liberal Unionist in support of this Bill. At present rating falls on tithe owners as occupiers like the rest, but unlike the rest the tithe owners are rated on the gross value—not on the net. This is one hardship which the Bill seeks to alleviate. Now to be rated on the gross and not on the net is bad enough, but it is not the worst. The tithe owner is rated on what is income, which is a still greater anomaly than the other. Other people are rated on their dwellings and land and taxed on their income, and the clergy are rated like the rest on dwelling and land, but, unlike the rest, are both rated and taxed on their income. That is another hardship. How did this arise? For the law is but the outcome of the practice. The overseer, not being himself a tithe owner, and the amount of the

tithe being an ascertained sum, down he put that sum in his rate-book, but he had a fellow feeling for other parishioners, who, like himself, were not tithe owners, and so rated them if anything less than the net value. Hence another hardship. Then as to the money to be provided under this Bill. My right hon. friend the Member for Bodmin calls it a fresh endowment of the Church, but how could you rightly capitalise what is to last only for two or three years, that is for the period assigned to the Agricultural Rating Act of 1896? It is also said the taxpayer will suffer. Why not? If he has been enjoying an advantage at the expense of his neighbour the tithe owner, that is no reason why he should continue to do so. I will not believe that the taxpayers are so mean as to begrudge this act of justice. Our opponents declare that it is a relief too scanty to be real, that a five-pound note every year is about all the poorest of the clergy can get out of it. Well, I take leave to say that many a poor clergyman will hail the five pounds as a considerable aid for his children's clothes bill, or even in some cases for their schooling. We are told by hon. Gentlemen opposite that it is not desirable to relieve one class without dealing with the claims of other classes, but we hold it is better to go by steps when we can than to wait for some indefinite future when we might be enabled to deal with the whole question of local taxation. The whole is made up of its parts, and if we do not make a beginning with part we may never make an ending with the whole.

*MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield): I have been much struck by the way in which the President of the Agricultural Board has repudiated the motives which it has been commonly supposed have actuated the Government in introducing this measure. He says it has no connection with agricultural depression. Then how comes it that it is he who has brought it in, instead of the President of the Local Government Board; to which matters of local taxation properly belong? And how is it that it is constructed on the lines of the Agricultural Rating Act, and that it will terminate with that Act? If there is no connection between the two the coincidence is at least curious. Two hon. Members opposite have expressed regret

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that the clergy were not included in the Agricultural Rating Act, and the same complaint has been made out-of-doors scores of times. A clerical correspondent of mine writes, "I lose one-third of my income for cheap bread." Yes! it is unfortunately true that what has been a boon to the multitude has been a pecuniary injury to the clergy. I believe that if the agricultural class were still in the enjoyment of the fat years of the past, instead of the lean years of the present, this clerical demand would not have been made. I believe further that we owe this Bill and its hurried introduction to the approach of a General Election and to the threats of the Established clergy. We are, however, told that this is not a Clergy Relief Bill, and the hon. Member for the Woodbridge Division says that he wants to strip the Bill of its clerical vestments, while the President of the Agricultural Board hopes that we shall hear no more about a clerical dole; but I can assure the one hon. Member that the vestments will cling too closely to be removed, and the other that he will continue to hear of the dole for many a day to come. If this Bill is not intended for the relief of the clergy as such, why are only the clerical receivers of tithe to have the benefit of it, when others have equally suffered from the diminution of tithe? If the Government are so anxious to do justice, why do they wish to do it on so limited a scale? The object of the Royal Commission on local taxation was to benefit all classes of ratepayers; but, without waiting for its Report, the Government has singled out two classes for immediate relief, and those two the most influential classes of the community, as well as those among whom they find their most numerous supporters. If, as we are told, relief has been too long delayed, that is equally true of other classes of ratepayers. The Government has had no word of sympathy for them, nor is it likely that, even when the Report is presented, the requisite changes will be made. The President of the Agricultural Board seems enamoured of the cleverness of his proposal, because the ratepayer will not feel the loss of the money of which the clergy will have the benefit; but he must have a very poor opinion of the ratepayers of this country if he thinks they can be so easily deceived. Parliament intended certain money to come into their hands for general public purposes,

and this Bill will intercept it on its way, instead of its going direct into their pockets. The only difference, therefore, is that between highway robbery and burglary—the victim equally suffering from either method. What Parliament gave with one hand this Bill takes away with the other, and when local Chancellors of the Exchequer have to frame their Budgets they will have to provide in other ways for the deficit which it will create. But this is much more than a ratepayers' question. The hon. Member for Stockport, in his striking and courageous speech, advocated the cause of the urban ratepayers; but he did more, for he declared that this Bill would impose an intolerable grievance on Nonconformists. That is true; because they will only not suffer, as ratepayers, but will have to give further support to a system to which they object. This measure is practically a revival of the policy which in past times gave large Parliamentary grants for the building of churches, and kept in existence for a lengthened period the odious system of Church rates. There are some Nonconformists who think that the removal of many of their grievances has had the effect of abating the desire for disestablishment; and if so, this Bill will have a useful effect as an irritant. Indeed, I believe that the advantage which will accrue to the disestablishment cause will be cheaply purchased by the £87,000 a year to be given for three years by this measure. I say so for two reasons. One is, that Churchmen will no longer be able to say that, as their endowments are their own, the Church does not now receive a single penny from the State. Of course, I differ from them as regards the endowments; but when this Bill has passed it will be no longer possible to make such a boast; as the money voted by it will be a complete answer. There is also the danger of fresh demands; for no one has stated why 50 per cent. has been fixed upon as the amount of the remission, and presently it will probably be contended that it is insufficient, and the whole claim upon the clergy may then vanish. A second reason I have for thinking that the Bill will advance disestablishment is the effect it will have on the finances of the Church. It is admitted that it will not do much to relieve clerical poverty; but it will do a great deal to prevent the suc-

cess of efforts for its diminution. I strongly sympathise with the underpaid clergy; and the only question which divides us is as to the source from which additional remuneration should come. There appear to me to be only two legitimate sources. One is a redistribution of ecclesiastical revenues, which would give at least a competence to all the clergy, and will not excessively remunerate any. There is, however, no prospect of such a change, and therefore what should be looked to is the liberality and good feeling of the members of the Church. Look at the contrast which at the present time is presented by that Church and the Free Churches of the country! The latter are proposing to begin a new century by raising large sums of money for increasing the incomes of their ministers and creating new religious agencies; and probably about two millions of money will be contributed for those purposes. On the other hand, the Clergy Sustentation Fund, which was commenced at the Queen's Jubilee, is stated to have been a miserable failure; and other appeals on behalf of the clergy have met with but partial success. Why have they failed? Partly, I believe, because the Church is thought to be rich enough to provide for all the clergy, if the money were fairly divided; but the chief reason is that the endowments pauperise its members and repress liberality. In support of that statement, I will give the House two short quotations. One is from the *Record* whose fidelity to the Church cannot be questioned. Writing some time ago, it said:

"We are suffering as a Church from the liberality of our forefathers, the landholders of Saxon times. Not that the clergy have too much wealth in consequence of the gift of tithes—they are largely starving—but that the laity have from that cause too little liberality. They are largely pauperised, made willing to receive their spiritual privileges as a charitable dole."

That is from an Evangelical quarter, and here is similar testimony from the *Church Times*, which is in the opposite camp:

"The average Churchman, it must be confessed, is a miracle of shabbiness. . . . He has yet to learn the first rudiments of almsgiving."

I do not believe that the lesson will be taught him by this Bill; on the contrary, I believe that for every pound which the

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Church will receive through this Bill it will lose two; while, at the same time, the distrust and prejudice with which the clergy are regarded will be increased. Those, however, are considerations which mainly concern Churchmen; whereas, I am speaking in the interest of the entire community, and especially in the interest of Nonconformity; and because I regard this as an unjust and a retrograde measure, I shall continue to resolutely oppose it.

SIR W. HART DYKE (Kent, Dartford): I will endeavour to be merciful to my fellow Members who are anxious to speak, but I find it is hard to give a silent vote upon this measure. I have listened to this Debate with great interest, and it seems that in a very short time we have got to a direct issue—namely, whether certain clergy of the Church of England had or had not for a long period been suffering from a grievous injustice with regard to the payment of their rates. The issue is a very narrow one, and can be easily and clearly put before the nation. There have been many subtle arguments as to the historical nature of the case, on which I do not intend to dwell. The question is, are we satisfied with regard to this question of injustice? Is it true or not that the clergy have been rated on a different basis to other ratepayers? Is not it true with regard to the relative position of the clergy and other ratepayers that deductions are made in the case of the ratepayers which in the case of the clergy are conspicuous by their absence? I deny the fact that has been urged upon the House that every clergyman takes his cure knowing that there will be this incubus upon his income. Clergymen who, fifteen or twenty years ago, accepted a cure knew nothing of the kind. The rates in many villages near where I live have gone up enormously; there have been new sanitary and School Board rates, and not only is this a new burden on the clergyman of the parish, but deductions are made in favour of all the other ratepayers which are not made in his case. I say this constitutes a serious injustice, and we do not want to go back forty-five years, to the days of Mr. Gladstone and Sir George Cornwall Lewis, to find that out. The Government has been asked why is it and how is it that the Government have at this particular juncture brought this forward? It is not an unnatural question for Members

to ask, but it is very easily answered. The Agricultural Rating Act did much to make it more acute, of that I have no doubt. Then as now we had this grievance, and what has emphasised the injustice was the passage of the Agricultural Rating Act of 1896. At the passing of that Act it was not possible to include the clergy in the Bill, but since then the Conservative party has pledged itself to deal with this injustice. After all, what is all this fuss about? We think nothing of parting with large sums of money in August, and now there is all this fuss about £87,000 in June for a limited period of years. Of course this proposal creates joy among the hon. Gentlemen opposite; they have had a very rough time lately. For many weary months their political horizon has been overcast with clouds, and if we can bring them a rift of sunlight I do not grudge it. But let them not be too sanguine as to what the ultimate result will be, because the case we can put before the country is a good one. They have got tired of beating the air on the Agricultural Ratings Bill; let them make hay while the sun shines, for when the country understands this question more fully it will be recognised that the Government is doing an act of justice. With regard to the motive power behind this measure, I introduced one of the largest and most influential deputations to the Prime Minister on this question last session; 104 Members of this side of the House waited upon him to urge upon him the desirability of bringing in such a measure. Whether we lose votes in the constituencies or not we reckon little. There is no time that can be a bad time for political parties to redeem pledges, to redress a manifest injustice. I should like to say one or two words with reference to the attacks which have been made upon the Church of England in this matter. I am not a Church politician, and in any remarks I make I throw no blame on any denomination. We are told that the Church is a rich Church, and that this relief should come not from the outside but from within; but the Church, although individually rich, is poor having regard to the demands upon her resources. In a charge delivered by the late Bishop of Rochester, he says that in 1881 the population of a particular parish was 100,000, and that it is now 450,000, which is an increase of 35,000 per annum.

The diocese therefore had to meet the needs practically of five additional parishes of 7,000 souls. The Church has not only to supply churches and schools, but a resident clergyman in each parish. I repudiate that in this matter the Church is guilty of any meanness because she does not meet this obligation which we are asking the House and country to meet. The more I look at this matter the more I am convinced that the Government have met the demand the Party has made upon them to meet this injustice. If it be true, as we hold it to be, that these clergymen have been unfairly rated in the past, and the other ratepayers have gained thereby, it is only fair that the other ratepayers should now repay some of the fine which has been so long inflicted on the clergy. I support this Bill because I think the injustice is manifest, and that the Government have right and justice on their side.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs): The right hon. Gentleman has invited us on this side of the House to make hay while the sun shines; but as all the hay has been carted on to the landlord's and the parson's hayricks I do not think there is much for us to attend to. The right hon. Gentleman has also every confidence in the justice of the cause which he puts before the country; but that confidence does not appear to be shared by Oldham, where both the Conservative candidates absolutely repudiated this Bill, and said that if they were returned they would vote against it; but I understand that this Bill has destroyed any chance they might have had of carrying out the promise. Since this Bill of doles has been introduced into the House, the electors of Plymouth have expressed their opinions in an emphatic manner, and completely at variance with those of the hon. and learned Member representing them in this House. But I rise now as a Welsh Member to protest against this measure, because we have a grievance with regard to this matter. Our grievance is a peculiar one, because this measure seeks to appropriate funds which are very largely drawn upon for educational purposes by Wales. Our grievance is still stronger, for the reason that in Wales we have exhausted every means under the Constitution to protest against using funds which belong to education to keep up a Church which only applies

to a minority of the population. I would not say anything if a strong case were made out for remedying an obvious injustice, but in this case the clergy are not the only or the greatest sufferers by the anomalies of our present system of rating. It is not merely the rating of income, but the rating of machinery which produces the income as well. What is the case of the lodging-housekeeper in seaside resorts, as in my own constituency? He lives in a house which is larger than he himself can use, and from which he derives a precarious income, and he is rated upon the value of that house to an extent larger, perhaps, than the income he receives. But the case of the shopkeeper, the lodging-housekeeper, the quarrymen—all these are forgotten, and only the case of one section of the community is to be considered. The Government pick and choose. While on the question of the Agricultural Rating Act, I am glad we have had an expression of opinion from the Royal Commission in regard to that Act, which confirms exactly what we pointed out at the time it was under discussion. It has increased the burdens on the general ratepayers throughout the country. I hold in my hand a statement which has been produced by a rural district council in Yorkshire, which shows that in every single parish of the district the effect of the Agricultural Rating Act has been to raise the rates; in one case to the extent of a shilling, and in another case to 1s. 9d. in the pound. This is due entirely to the miserable system of doles initiated by the present Government. It is perfectly true that the clergy suffer, but what about the shopkeepers, the artisans, the lodging-house keepers, and all other sections of the community? Not a word is said about them. A good deal has been said during this Debate by way of expressing sympathy with the clergy in their distress; but the way in which the clergy have acted in this matter has lessened the sympathy which might otherwise have been felt for them. They gave evidence before the Royal Commission. They were there to represent their parishioners; they knew perfectly well that the grievances they endured were participated in by all their parishioners. But not a single word was given of any grievance suffered by these parishioners. It was all about their own injustice, their own grievance. The Rev. James Manners Sutton, a rector from Suffolk, gave evi-

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dence. One of the first questions put to him was, "I understand that the rates in your parish have, as a matter of fact, risen very much during the last three years." His answer was, "Very much indeed in my case, if that is what you mean." "I mean in the parish as a whole," said the Chairman. To which the reverend gentleman replied, "I have not gone into how the rates of the parish as a whole have risen." It is only when the facts are elicited, and when it is shown that the rates of the parish have gone up very largely through the operation of the Agricultural Rating Act, that this reverend gentleman very reluctantly admits that others suffer as much as he does. This is the "Am I my brother's keeper" attitude taken up by the spiritual guides of the people—

HON. MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I do not see why these gentlemen should be spared. They are coming here to ask for £87,000 at the expense of the people, who are suffering in many cases much more than they are, and I think it is high time that the facts should be stated in regard to them. They are not taxed on their professional income. The point has been made over and over again, that the maintenance of the poor was a tax on the tithe. That has been challenged. Of course, it was imposed in the first instance for the maintenance of the poor. We hear a good deal of the opinion of the Fathers of the Church nowadays. It is always quoted whenever there is a question of ritual. One of these Holy Fathers wrote:

"Men pay tithes for God's church; let the priest divide them into three—one part for the repair of the church, the second part for the poor, and the third part for God's servant."

What has become of the poor's third part? At the present moment they are getting 2s. in the pound, or a tenth, whereas formerly it was a third, or 6s. 8d. Now they say a tenth is too much, we should only pay a twentieth. The Fathers of the Church may be good enough for quotation to justify a breach of the law of the land, in regard to extravagant ritual; but whenever it is a question of fulfilling the obligations imposed on them, then the Fathers of the Church are thrown overboard, and the "King

v. Jodrell" is brought in instead. It is very wonderful how the opinions of the clergy alter according to the character of these decisions in regard to ecclesiastical matters. The right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down quoted very largely from some authority with regard to the voluntary contributions of the Church towards carrying on its work. This was in reply to the taunts made from this side of the House, that if the clergy were in distress the members of the Church should supplement their income by their own subscriptions. There was a letter in the *Standard* this week which supports the Clergy Tithe Rent-charge Bill. The writer, who signs his name, says :

"I have examined the reports of the Church funds and charities, and have analysed the offertories at many large churches, with the result that the average contribution scarcely represents 1½d. per worshipper."

Now the Calvinistic Methodists of Wales contribute 30s. per head, and among the members are the quarrymen of the community. These men sacrifice their lives to earn every penny they place on the altar; and yet they are asked by this Bill to contribute in addition in aid of clergymen whose supporters value their services at 1½d. per head. No marvel that there is a strong feeling in every part of the country in regard to the iniquity of this proposal now before the House. On what is this dole of £87,000 based? Upon a Report brought up in a hurry by a Commission appointed for another purpose. I trust hon. Members have perused the Report. As far as I can see, the main pillar and support of this policy was a clergyman of the name of Jones. The changes are rung on the name of the Rev. Mr. Jones on page after page of the Report. First of all we have what the Rev. Mr. Jones said in 1836, and then what he said in 1840: and then there is a pamphlet which proves that the Rev. Mr. Jones is of the same opinion in 1850; and then there is a quotation in a footnote from a letter written by the Rev. Mr. Jones to Sir Robert Peel. All is Jones until you get sick of the Rev. Mr. Jones, in spite of the honourable and ancient name he bears, and until you do not care "What Happened to Jones." Jones is really the basis of the whole case. But then he is supported by the Rev. Mr. Stevens, who is said to be an authority on tithe—quite a superfluous explanation, for he is a clergyman. It is just

like saying that a lawyer is an authority on fees. Then after this clergyman there is some gentleman of the name of Peterson, who is a kind of bum-bailiff for the collection of tithes. That is the kind of impartial gentleman who gives evidence on which we are asked to grant this £87,000. Finally, there is the climax of the whole thing—the evidence of the secretary of the Church party in this House. And that is the evidence on which we are asked to vote money out of the funds used for educational purposes. It is said we must make deductions for the services of the clergy. What an insult to the clergy! Their services are valued by the Government at half the sum paid for them. I should say the services of the clergy are worth what they are paid for them. No, there is really no grievance. I would invite the attention of the House to the grievance Mr. Jones makes out. He says, before the Commutation days the income of the clergy was not known, and therefore the overseers could not get at it; and in the case of the land the overseers could not ascertain what the value is, and the farmer got off. But since the Commutation the value of the clergyman's interest is known, and he never escapes his little liabilities! And this grievance has lived since 1836, and Mr. Jones has left this as a *post obit*—that the clergy are not now in as good a position to deceive the overseers as formerly! This is a grievance seriously put forth by a minister of the only "Hall-marked religion" in the land. Is that a grievance on which to base a claim of this character? It is necessary not merely to make out a case of grievance, but a case of urgency. It is admitted that our system of local taxation is unfair, unequal, and inequitable. It is admitted by hon. Gentlemen opposite that large sections of the community are suffering sorely from the same grievance. Therefore we say, Why not redress the grievance of everybody at the same time? If you redress the grievance piecemeal it is not made less, but is increased. The grievance will be increased to all except the clergy by another 2d. in the £ by this Bill. You profess that you have got a case of special urgency for the clergy; but the real urgency is to be found in the case of the rural ratepayers, whose rates are exceedingly high at the present moment in many districts of England and Wales.

A rate of 8s. in the £ has been quoted, but I know of a case where it is 11s. 3d. in the £. The result of these high rates is that there is a practical bar to every public improvement. The provision of open spaces, increased accommodation for the working classes, improved sanitation—all these things are being stopped by the high rates. I can give the evidence of clergymen themselves to show what a terror an increase in the rates is to them. One clergyman says, "I am very much afraid that next year will bring in some sanitary expense." Human nature is pretty much the same, especially if it is in holy orders. We have heard a good deal of the condition of the poor in large towns, of fever-breeding congested districts, and of people rotting in the slums, but nothing has been done to improve these conditions. It is the high rates that are stopping the improvements, and in passing this Bill we will aggravate the matter. What an answer this Bill will be to those Welsh constituencies who at the last election gave up their share in the great struggle for religious equality which has been part of the inheritance of their race! And what for? For a prospect of a 5s. pension when sixty-five years of age, and for the sake of the prospect of improved dwellings. All I can say is that the mess of pottage promised to them has been consumed by other Gentlemen who are higher up at the table. Yes; the disappointment is not confined merely to the Welsh constituencies. Go into Lancashire, into Cornwall, and all over the country, and anyone who looks up the record of this Government must see what effect it will have on the rural constituencies. There you have a gentleman who owns the whole of a parish, and all over the country there are communities working hard late and early to increase his wealth and consequence. He has got his old age pension already.

HON. MEMBERS: Question.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: It is the Question, and hon. Members will find it out. He has got it already; and then comes the priest of his household, who gets three times the income which the poor Nonconformist minister receives (£10, £20, or £50 a year)—and he gets his pension. But the man who was talked about far more than any other at the last

election, the working man, is entirely left out. There was not a word said about the Clerical Tithes Bill then. It was not on the "Manchester Card." It was not on the "Birmingham Liberal Unionist Programme." But the promises made to the working man were there clear, definite, and detailed. The age was fixed, the amount of the pension was fixed, and "any further particulars can be supplied by the Liberal Unionist agents." But the money which was to be devoted to this purpose has been given to the landlord and the parson. Why, the squire and the parson have broken into the poor box, and divided its contents among them. I would remind hon. Gentleman opposite that these promises were not made by politicians hungering for office, and making any promises at random. They were made by gentlemen who at the moment were Ministers of the Crown, and that was what lent importance to them, and that is why they were believed. They were spoken, not on behalf of a great party, but in the name of the Throne, and "shall Cæsar send a lie?" I say that the men who were promised some provision for old age are still left out in the cold, and the Tammany ring of landlords and parsons are dividing, by this Bill, the last remnants of the money between them.

*MR. LOWE (Birmingham, Edgbaston): As a representative of one of those large urban constituencies which were referred to the other evening by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Fife, I beg to ask the indulgence of the House for a few moments while I state, as briefly as I can, the grounds upon which I wish to give my hearty support to this Bill, and the reasons why I intend to vote for its Second Reading. In spite of the somewhat startling and sensational utterances of the hon. Member for Stockport, and notwithstanding the gloomy prognostications of the hon. Members for Bodmin and West Monmouth as to the effect this Bill is likely to have on the working classes in the constituencies, I must say that I am not at all afraid of the effect it will have on the working classes of Birmingham. Because, after a long experience of these classes, I am able to say that one of their chief characteristics is their great sense of justice and fair play, and that, if they are left to themselves, they can, in the great majority of cases,

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be relied upon to do unto others as they themselves would be done by. Now, if I thought for a single moment that this Bill constituted anything like an additional endowment of the Church of England by the State, I do not hesitate to say that I would not vote for it on any account whatever. But I very respectfully submit that it cannot be reasonably held to bear any such interpretation. For the relief which is proposed to be given by it, is not in the nature of a gift or bounty bestowed without any consideration on the other side; but it is a payment of a debt or obligation which has been incurred by the State, and which is justly due and owing to those who have suffered a public wrong at the hands of the community for many years past. Nor do I think that it is any valid argument against this Bill to say, as has been said by the hon. Member for Halifax and several other hon. Members opposite, that it is a return for services rendered at the last General Election, or that it is an interim dividend, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouth described it. I do not know whether many of these unfortunate clergymen voted for the Unionist Party at the last General Election, but all I can say is, that if they did so it shows their good sense. It is certainly likely to encourage, rather than to deter, other sections of the community who have legitimate grievances to place their faith in that Party on any future occasion, when they find that the leaders of that Party are not only ready to make promises for the redress of those grievances at Election times, but to redeem their pledges and perform those promises when the Election is over, and as soon as an opportunity is afforded them. Now, I should like to go for one moment to another point. It is all very well for the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition to compare the case of these clergy with that of the ministers of the Scotch Church, and to say that if those ministers had not a sufficient income the deficiency would be made up to them by the munificence of private individuals—viz., the members of their own Church. But if the right hon. Gentleman will pardon me for saying so, I respectfully submit that this is entirely beside the mark. I do not for a moment admit that the Members of the Scotch Church are more generous in the support of their church and ministers than the

Members of the English Church are in the support of theirs; in fact, I think if we came to examine into the matter closely, we should find that the latter would be found to compare at least on equal terms with the former. But as I have said that is entirely beside the mark, and the question we have to decide in this Debate, and by the division which is to follow, is, not the relative generosity and open-handedness of the members of this or that particular church, but whether it is fair and right and just that a certain section of the clergy of the Church of England should be rated upon their professional incomes, which they receive only on condition that they do certain work and render certain services—when other clergymen of the same Church—when the ministers of every other denomination, and when those who follow any other calling or profession are entirely exempt from any such form of local taxation. We all know that lawyers, doctors, shopkeepers, and business and professional men of all kinds, are assessed and rated upon the annual value of the premises which they occupy, and that is considered a fair criterion of their rateable capacity. But these poor unfortunate clergymen are not only, rated upon the annual value of the houses which they occupy but also on their incomes—i.e., the only remuneration that they receive for the services which they render, and the only resources they have upon which to rely for the maintenance of themselves and their families. Well, Sir, I do not care to follow those hon. and right hon. Gentlemen who have conducted a laborious and intricate examination into the legal history of this case almost from time immemorial. I am one of those, referred to by the right hon. Gentleman opposite, who do not trouble their heads with the law as it was in the time of Queen Elizabeth. I say, “let the dead past bury its dead,” and I am quite satisfied, for the purpose of the present question, to take the law as I find it to-day, and I say that the law as it now stands is a bad law, that it is unjust, antiquated, and out of date, and the sooner it is altered and put right the better it will be for all concerned. These clergymen are in very many cases—I hope in the great majority of cases—carrying on a most admirable work, and frequently in very poor parishes amongst very poor people, who stand greatly in need of all the assistance

which can possibly be afforded them, and it would in most of these cases be a very great loss and hardship upon them if they were deprived of the services and assistance which these clergymen, poorly paid as they are, are able to render to them at the present time. Moreover, they are, by virtue of their training and education, entirely unfitted to follow any other form of employment, and they could not change their occupation even if they were minded to do so. "Oh, but!" say some very well-meaning people, "this may be an injustice, but why should the Government single out this from all the other inequalities and injustices which exist in our present system of rating, and go out of their way to find a remedy for it now; and this especially at a time when the clergy of the Church of England have been getting themselves into bad odour and disrepute by their illegal practices?" Well, Sir, it seems to me that the answer to this question is perfectly clear and obvious. In the first place, there are black sheep in every fold, but that is no reason why you should punish the whole flock for the sins of the few. If there has been wrongdoing, if there have been improper practices on the part of a certain number—and I think it is a very small number—"No!"—well, at all events, a certain number—if there have been improper practices on the part of a certain number of the clergy, that may be a very excellent reason for punishing these wrongdoers, but it is certainly no reason whatever for withholding justice from, or for perpetuating an injustice against the whole class to which they belong. The reason why this case has become so urgent, the reason why the grievance has become so intolerable that it cannot wait to be redressed until the whole question is dealt with, is to my mind equally clear. It is because in consequence of the fall in prices, and, in many cases also, of the increase of rates, the hardship has been growing more burdensome and more acute every year; and I take it that it is this consideration, and this consideration alone, which has induced the Royal Commission to present the interim Report which has formed the foundation for this Bill; a Report which unanimously recognises the existence of the wrong, and almost unanimously recommends that some special measure of relief shall be immediately applied to it without waiting for the much longer period which must necessarily elapse before the

whole of this complicated question can possibly be dealt with. I do not think it is altogether a fair or a courteous method of political controversy for hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite to allege that the members of this Commission—who are all honourable men drawn from both political parties—and who possess, and deservedly possess, the confidence of both sides of the House—I say I do not think it fair to allege that they would lend themselves to a sort of underhand trick whereby they agreed to present this report at the bidding and instigation of the Government to help them out of a difficulty. I know several members of this Commission personally, and particularly do I know the Town Clerk of Birmingham. A higher authority on rating questions could not be found throughout the whole of the country, and I am perfectly sure that neither he nor any other members of this Commission would have lent themselves to so disingenuous a proceeding. Well then, my contention is that the Report of a strong, reliable, and impartial Commission, founded upon a growing and increasing wrong, is at least a sufficient justification for the action of the Government in singling out this injustice for special and immediate treatment. I further contend that it should have been dealt with three years ago when the Agricultural Rating Bill was passed, and that the present Bill simply remedies the omission which was then made by excluding these clergy from all participation in the benefits which were conferred by that Act. But, Sir, I very respectfully submit to hon. Gentlemen opposite that they should be the last people in the world to refuse to assist us in passing this Bill into law. And why? Because their former great leader, Mr. Gladstone, and the members of the Commission who were of their own way of thinking—and many other members of their own Party—have over and over again admitted that the present system of rating tithes is wrong, and that it constitutes a manifest injustice. This being the case, I contend that it is inconsistent with all their former traditions, and antagonistic to every political principle which they have ever professed, that they should not assist us in finding a remedy for this admitted grievance. I have always been taught to believe that it was one of the chief offices and functions of the Liberal Party to seek

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out any wrong, injustice or inequality which might anywhere be found in order that they might at once devote themselves to the task of setting it right. I know that they are not predisposed to look with any great favour upon anything which savours of the parson or the squire. I do not blame them for it in the slightest degree ; for I know it is their natural instinct and that they cannot help it. But I also know that hon. Gentlemen opposite can on occasions be most tolerant, most fair, and most Liberal-minded even to a parson, and I do appeal to them on this occasion not to allow their sympathies to be deadened and their natural sense of right, justice, and fair-dealing to be warped and interfered with, merely because the class which is dealt with by this Bill happens to be that much-maligned class to which I have referred. If hon. Gentlemen opposite will for the moment try and banish from their minds the recollection that the persons to be relieved under this Bill are clergymen, and will think only of them as men, and as being in very many cases very poor men and very deserving men, suffering under a grievous wrong and injustice, I am not without hope that they will even at the eleventh hour reconsider the determination which they have formed to hamper and impede the progress of this very just measure of relief.

*SIR H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): Mr. Speaker, I have carefully listened to the whole course of this Debate, and I am bound to say, now that it is approaching its close, that I feel, to a greater extent than I did before, the difficulty, almost the impossibility, of reconciling the varied, the diverse contentions which have been urged upon the House in favour of this measure. The hon. Member who has just sat down added a new ground, which has not, I think, been presented before—namely, that it is a debt and burden owing by the State. Well, Sir, we have heard, not only of this being a debt and burden owing by the State ; we have had complaints made about the injustice of rating tithes, about the injustice of the manner of assessment, of the special injustice in the rating of the clerical tithe-owner ; and my right hon. friend the Member for the Dartford Division of Kent raised also to-night, and very frankly admitted, the extra

injustice occasioned by the passing of the Agricultural Rating Act of 1896. We have also had, I think, pretty nearly the same contrariety of opinion in reference to the remedy proposed. I am not going into the history of this case, I am not going into the law of the case, I am not going back 200 or 300 years with reference to finding out what was the position of the rating of tithes in this country. One of the witnesses, not a witness before the Commission, but a witness quoted by the Commissioners, who gave evidence before one of the earlier Committees, gravely informed that Committee—and the present Royal Commission considered his opinion so valuable that they have reprinted it for our information—that in his judgment it was not the intention of the framer of the Act of Elizabeth to rate spiritual tithes. I think we have no evidence of and no necessity to refer to what was in the mind of the distinguished draftsman, whoever he was, who drafted that Act of Parliament 300 years ago. I am content to confine what I have to say to what is the law to-day, and the law to-day is the law that was enacted in 1836. Whatever was the state of the law before then does not really concern the present issue. Lord John Russell, in introducing the measure, told the House that tithes were subject to the same rates as land, and that the Bill would be framed on that assumption. His Bill was so framed, and was so carried through both Houses of Parliament, and the Act enacted that tithe should pay all Parliamentary rates, all parochial rates, all county rates, and every other rate which might be assessed upon it. Therefore I am not arguing now as to whether that was right or wrong—that is not the question. The question is, what is the law, and the law is what was enacted in 1836, and that law affects all tithe-owners, whether clerical or lay. Now, we cannot separate the passing of that Act from the whole question of tithe commutation, of which it formed a part, and it is the fact of that tithe commutation which, I think, has brought about to some extent the present state of affairs—at all events, as I read the evidence and part of the recommendations of the Commissioners' report, I have come to that conclusion. The tithe commutation, I think, was a great advantage to the tithe-owner. I think he gained considerably by the commutation

of an unfixed and uncertain payment into a fixed and certain payment. He was in a decidedly superior position to what he previously enjoyed. He was then subject to the disadvantages which might arise from deficient crops or other causes which might affect the produce of the soil; for the future, whatever might be the result, good harvests or bad, nothing was to affect his tenth, which was commuted for a money payment. It is worthy of note that Lord John Russell stated that at one time he had the notion of making the tithe a fixed charge upon the rent. I have no doubt that if that measure had been adopted it would have been very acceptable to those agricultural members who have in this House complained so bitterly of the heavy charge of the tithe on land, which was hardly producing any rent; but the result would have been very different to the tithe-owner. So far as the averages are concerned, for the first fifty years after the passing of the Act commuting the tithe, the tithe rent-charge was above par, the average being £102 9s. 9½d. Therefore there was no loss then. But I admit—and this is one of the circumstances which complicates this case—that there has been a terrible fall in the money value of the tithe during the last few years. I think the highest point reached in the last fifteen or sixteen years was in 1883, which was the last year when it went over par (£100 4s. 9¾d.); but now I make out, according to the average of the last seven years, that it has got down to £68 14s. 11d.—at all events, under £70. This money payment was fixed subject to the payment of rates, and in every one of the three modes about which there has been some controversy the rate question was dealt with. Where the tithe was paid in kind and the tithe-owner paid the rates no deduction or addition was made in respect of rates. The gross value was commuted, and the sum so fixed was subject, as the tithe in kind had been, to rates. Where there was a composition for a fixed sum, and the tithe-owner paid the rates, the commutation was based on the fixed sum, and this sum was subject, as before, to the rates; and where (as Mr. Porter, the Secretary of the Ecclesiastical Commission, thought was the most common case) the composition was for a fixed sum free from rates, the composition was taken as the commutation value, with the addition of a sum for rates based on the average of

the preceding seven years, and these two sums made up the commutation value. Where the rates were large the clergy, or, rather, the tithe-owner—for I do not wish to deal with this as a clerical question alone—got a distinct advantage, because the rates were taken on the average of the preceding seven years, and I think it will be difficult to find in the present century a period of seven years when the rates were higher than they were in the seven years preceding 1836. The cost of the administration of the poor in 1833 was 7 millions; for the seven years preceding the tithe commutation the average amounted to 6½ millions, whereas in the years which followed it went down to 4½ millions. Whatever hon. Members may say about rates having risen, it is an actual ascertained statistical fact that rates have gone down, and they are lower by 1s. 2d. in the £ than they were at that time, and still more in the rural districts than in the urban districts. The hon. and learned Member for Plymouth has referred to what he calls the unfair mode in which the assessment was and is carried out, and we have had in the Debate, and notably in the speech of the hon. and learned Member for Stroud, a series of arguments founded upon what the law ought to have been, instead of what the law is and what the meaning of Parliament was. The meaning of Parliament is expressed in what Parliament says in the Act, and the true interpretation of that meaning is for judges and for no one else. We cannot go behind the Act and the interpretation placed upon it. I may say in passing that the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth told us that a clause was agreed to be put in to produce a certain result. But somehow or other it was altered. But we cannot go behind what is in the Act of Parliament, and we have this singular confirmation, that that was not inconsistent with what the Duke of Richmond and the House of Lords intended, because the decision which finally demolished the contention which my hon. and learned friend looks upon with approval was given in 1840. Sir Robert Peel, at the head of a great Tory administration, came into power in 1841, and Sir Robert Peel was not likely at that time, having regard to the composition of his majority, to have permitted the continuance of an injustice found upon

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a breach of an understanding, in passing an Act of Parliament through the Upper House, and there can be no doubt that from the decision which the Court of Queen's Bench came to in 1840 the statesmen of that day, and the Conservative leaders of that day were satisfied that there was nothing inconsistent with what Parliament intended, or they understood to have been intended, three or four years before legislation would have followed. Every speaker has alluded to what Mr. Gladstone said in reference to the gross injustice of this mode of rating. My hon. and learned friend the Member for Plymouth read a quotation from Mr. Gladstone's speech, but he did not tell the House when that speech was delivered.

MR. CRIPPS (Gloucester, Stroud): Yes.

SIR H. H. FOWLER: He did not tell the House the circumstances under which it was delivered; nor what the point was against which Mr. Gladstone was arguing when he made that remark. I will recall it to his recollection. Mr. Gladstone made that speech in regard to the Budget of December, 1852, in a very excited House, and in very excited circumstances. It was the concluding speech of a Debate which resulted in the defeat of the Conservative Government. Mr. Gladstone was arguing at that time against what? There was no question before Parliament as to the rating of tithes. There was no expression of any deliberate and well-formed opinion as to what course should be pursued in reference to a change being made in favour of the tithe-owner. Mr. Gladstone was arguing against a proposal of the Government of that day to bring the poor clergy within the range of the income-tax. The limit of the income-tax was then £150 a year, and what Lord Beaconsfield proposed was to reduce that limit under Schedules A and E from £150 to £50 a year, and under Schedules B and D—the occupation of land being under one schedule and the profits of trades and professions under the other—from £150 to £100 a year. Therefore Mr. Gladstone was dealing with what he considered an improper attempt, which he himself defeated, to impose the income-tax as a fresh burden upon the occupants of small livings, and with reference to that he did

interject the remark as to the gross injustice of the rate. I do not wish to minimise it at all. I think my right hon. friend behind me has called attention to the fact that Mr. Gladstone was not the man to shrink from redressing what he believed to be an injustice, and especially an injustice to the Church of England, in any shape or form. He had never been Chancellor of the Exchequer at the time he made that speech, but after he made that speech he was Chancellor of the Exchequer for a long series of years, and he was also Prime Minister for a long series of years. We are told that this question never slumbered, but at all events I do not find that Mr. Gladstone ever dealt with it legislatively. But, Sir, there is another authority which has been quoted in this Debate, to which on this question, with all respect, I attach a greater weight. My right hon. friend described Sir George Cornwall Lewis as a great financial genius. I will describe Sir George Cornwall Lewis not only as one of the ablest, but one of the wisest, statesmen of this century—one of the greatest men that ever belonged to the Liberal Party. And Sir George Cornwall Lewis gave very clear and distinct evidence upon this point. We have been told by the hon and learned Member for Plymouth that Sir George Cornwall Lewis stamped with his high authority the objection to the rating of tithe-owners, and declared that it was an injustice. Let me read what Sir George Cornwall Lewis did state. He said—and it is in the Report—

“There is no doubt that this Act” (the Tithe Act of 1836) “has operated very considerably to the disadvantage of the tithe-owner with respect to rating, and that is the point which I am desirous of mentioning to the Committee. It has acted injuriously to the tithe-owner in this manner. It has exhibited the entire amount of his tithe in public and in authentic form, and therefore, the tithe commutation being known and ascertained, the overseer has put down the tithe-owner in the rate-book at the full amount. But, being himself generally a farmer, he rates the other farmers in the parish at an amount less than the annual value, a practice certain to give the occupiers of land within the parish an advantage in comparison with the tithe-owner.”

Where is there any disapproval of the mode of rating there? He states a fact. [A laugh.] Will the hon. Member who laughs quote a paragraph which states that rating to the assessable value is contradictory to the law? It is always well to go back

and see whether anything else was said. But that was not all that Sir George Cornewall Lewis said. In reply to further questions he said :

"It has been proposed not to rate tithe so far as it is a remuneration for services. It has been said that the rating portion of the tithe ought to be that portion which may be considered as the net payment beyond that for the remuneration of services, and that you ought to deduct from the tithe rent-charge as much as would cover the salary of a curate, which would be a remuneration for services performed, but the principle has never yet been admitted in the legislation of this country, but the entire tithe with certain deductions has been rated."

Then a noble Lord, who did not appear to be quite satisfied, asked—

"Is the Committee to understand that your opinion is that the owner of the tithe rent commutation charge is at present subject to no injustice in rating except that which may arise from the greater facility there is for obtaining this net income?"

And Sir George Cornewall Lewis replied :

"I am not aware myself of any disadvantage to which the owner of tithe rent-charge is subjected than this—that his cards are shown, whereas the cards of other ratepayers are not shown; and in my opinion, the most proper and equitable mode of redressing that disadvantage is to compel the other party to show all his cards, rather than to withdraw the whole of them."

Not one word is said as to the injustice of which we have heard so much to-night. I now come to the remedy which the Commissioners suggest for the injustice which they allege exists. And what do they suggest? I am assuming that the injustice is admitted, which it is not. They said that the state of the law was unjust to the clerical tithe-owner, but that it was also unjust to the lay tithe-owner. You say you throw aside the argument of the poverty of the clergy, and that you proceed solely on the ground that this is an unjust law, and ought to be redressed. Then why confine your redress to one class of tithe-owners alone? Why leave out of consideration the owners of tithes separated from benefices? No distinction can be drawn which could hold water. It has been said that it is our duty to pay special respect to the opinions of gentlemen who compose a Royal Commission, and that they have been improperly criticised. All we are entitled to do is to deal with them in their public capacity. But I wish to refer to the history of this

Commission. I took a part, if I may say so, in the movement in this House which resulted in the concession by the Government of the appointment of the Royal Commission on whose report this Bill is said to be based. When the Government were proposing to benefit, unjustly as we thought, one class of ratepayers and leave all the others out of consideration, and when there was a feeling—not expressed, perhaps, with the same force as it was expressed the other night by the hon. Member for Stockport—of hostility on the part of urban Members against the proposal of the Government, the Government said :

"We admit that local taxation bears hardly upon the urban taxpayer, and we promise that there shall be an immediate inquiry"—into what?—"into the rating of personal property as well as real property, with a view to giving relief to dwellers in towns as well as dwellers in the country."

The Commission was accordingly appointed, and what was it to inquire into?—"whether all kinds of real and personal property contribute equitably to taxation for local purposes." That was in 1896; and we have not yet got the Report of the Commission on that point. There has been a good deal of talk during this debate of the grievance of the clerical tithe-owner. I admit it. I also admit the grievance of the agricultural ratepayer. But I say the grievance of the urban ratepayer is greater. The President of the Board of Agriculture said the Government had arrived at the £87,000 by taking the average rate as 2s. 6d. in the £. What is the rate in Wolverhampton? What are the rates in all the large urban districts? It is 7s. 4d. in the £. These rates are steadily growing, and we have no remedy proposed. I treat with the utmost respect the gentlemen who compose the Royal Commission on Local Taxation; I attribute no motives to them; but I say their first duty was to deal with the task entrusted to them, which was to suggest a remedy for the grievances under which all property holders labour in respect of local taxation, instead of reporting, as they have done, with regard to one class of property and one class of property alone. Now there are three courses suggested as a remedy by the Commission. First, we have the suggestion that there should be a special measure of relief. Secondly, that there should be special legislation for the purpose of dealing with the deductions; and

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we have also what, I think, was the very wise suggestion of my right hon. friend the Member for Clackmannan, with which he objected to special legislation. But, Sir, what I would submit to the House is this, if the law is unjust—that is your contention—well, then, alter the law. Do not vote a sum of money out of the public funds to be levied indiscriminately upon those who are suffering by this bad law. That is not constitutional; that is not in accordance with precedent. Many Members may be able to recall a case of rating injustice which was discussed in both the last and the preceding Parliaments. I am alluding to the question of the rating of machinery. There was a great majority of this House, both under Conservative and Liberal Governments, who considered that the state of the law with reference to the rating of machinery was most unjust and unfair. I remember my friend, the late Mr. Winterbotham making a most powerful and convincing speech on this subject, in which he showed how it was crushing out local industries in Stroud, in Gloucestershire, and in the West of England, and other Members from all parts, both urban and rural, pointed out the same thing. Five times did the House pass the Second Reading of a measure for the relief of that injustice. In the time of the Conservative Government there was a majority of 153 for the Second Reading, and under the Liberal Government the majority was 152. The Bill was blocked for reasons into which I will not enter; but an hon. Member who took a prominent part in opposing the Bill said he objected to it on the ground that it was not fair to alter one description of rating until the time arrived for altering all descriptions of rating. Now, what would you have thought if my right hon. friend the Member for West Monmouth had come down and said with respect to that Bill, “We have no time to alter the law; we are not prepared to do that; but we will give you a sum of money out of the death duties”? Such a proposal would have been laughed out of the House. It would have been said that he was playing, and improperly playing, with public money under those circumstances. You have no right to redress a bad law by making a present of the money of one class of the ratepayers in order to benefit another. That brings me to another point. The Bill proposes that the

relief shall apply to the owner of any benefice. There is no distinction as to the value of the benefice. Of course, it is put upon the high ground that you must not distinguish between rich and poor benefices. Well, Sir, that is absolutely inconsistent with the argument that the present system of rating presses so hard upon poor benefices. That is what the Government did in the Agricultural Rating Act—they did not distinguish between land worth 10s. an acre and land worth £10 an acre. I had a letter the other day from a friend of mine who had received half his rates back, as a distressed agriculturist, and he tells me that he has sold the land for which he received this relief for £500 an acre. The same principle is applied to this measure. They come down to the House and point to the hardship of the men with large families and small livings; but they give the relief to all alike—they give it to the man with the living of £1,000 a year as well as to the man with a poor living. It is a wrong principle and given in an extravagant and unfair way. My right hon. friend the Member for Bodmin referred to a point upon which I wish only to say a word. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Agriculture talked of the sum of £87,000 as if it were of little account; but when once the House has allowed a grant of this kind, as an hon. Member reminded us to-night, it is very difficult to undo that sort of legislation, and if you are going to vote £87,000 the House must take its capitalised value, which is over £3,000,000. We are told that the Bill only operates for a limited period. Much the same argument was used with reference to the Agricultural Rating Bill. Now I come to an extraordinary matter, the finance of this Bill. There is to be an interception of an interception. The money that ought to go into the Exchequer is first diverted into the Local Taxation Account, and then the Board of Inland Revenue has power to pay it to the respective local collectors of rates. That is a question we shall discuss pretty fully when we go into Committee on that clause. I only mention it now. The right hon. Gentleman says, “There is a sum of money somewhere that we really do not know what to do with; it is a surplus which has grown up nobody knows how,” and the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth actually said that the local authorities would have some difficulty in knowing how to spend

the money: I wish that among his many advantages—his unrivalled advantages—the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth had the advantage of experience of municipal work for two years. He would find that municipalities have no difficulty whatever in knowing how to spend their money. He would find that they cannot at times answer the demands that come upon them. Every year a sum is paid to the authorities on account of their share of the local taxation account, and there is always a balance at the end of the year, but until the accounts are closed nobody knows what the exact amount is, and that balance is distributed early in the following financial year when it is received. The sum that was available at the end of the year March 31st, 1897—the Return for the year ended March 31st, 1898, is not yet issued, but it will not vary much—was £845,000. What is proposed is to take 10 per cent. of that sum away from the local authorities and give it for this new purpose; and in this connection I wonder if the right hon. Gentleman has worked out the sum. I have worked out some of the figures. I find that the County of Stafford is now receiving £22,000 a year from this surplus, and you are going to take 10 per cent. of that £22,000 from the County of Stafford. Then Lancashire. That is a county in which the Government have a special interest, especially at this moment. I have no doubt we shall see to-morrow morning that the Member for Plymouth and the Member for Dartford will make good their challenges and go down and address the electors of Oldham and try to do away with the unfortunate impression which has been made there by the fact that the two Conservative candidates have declared that they would not vote for this Bill. Well, Lancashire receives £100,000 a year from the balance of this fund, and this Bill will inflict on Lancashire a fine of £10,000 for the purpose of this endowment which the House is now asked to sanction. Do hon. and right hon. Gentlemen believe that this burden is going to be permanently placed on the back of the people without eliciting indignant protests from the rate-payers. But then, Sir, the Member for Stroud and the Member for Plymouth declare that this is not a question of doles or of charity. No, Sir, it is not a question of doles or of charity,

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I agree that the clergy of the Church of England, and the clergy of the Church of Rome, and the clergy of the various Nonconformist Churches are as a rule underpaid. I believe that the labourer is worthy of his hire, and especially that class of labourer that represents the ministerial offices in all the Churches. I admit that is not a question of charity. I admit that these clergymen have a right to have their miserably small incomes made up. They have a right to be relieved from the payment of a heavy burden. They have a right to a just remuneration for the lifelong labour, the unceasing sacrifices as well as the constant assiduity with which they discharge their sacred offices. But against whom have they that right? Not against the revenue of the country. They have no right against the taxpayers, who belong to all creeds or to no creed. They have a right, and the right is against the Church at whose altars they minister, a right against the Christian men and the Christian women of whatever rank in society, from the peerage to the peasantry, whom they serve in that office, and to whom they afford spiritual teaching and consolation. I am not going to say anything disrespectful of the clergy or the laity of the Church of England, but, Sir, I cannot help contrasting what the laity and the clergy are doing in Scotland—in the Free Church, in the United Presbyterian Church of Scotland—and in the whole of the Nonconformist Churches of England and Wales. Hon. Members apparently are not aware that these burdens of rates arise elsewhere than in the Church of England. Perhaps I may refer to one Church of which I know something—I mean the Wesleyans. Every married Wesleyan minister is entitled to and has a furnished house, rent free, and the rates of that house are paid for him. His Church never asks him to pay a single shilling of rates, and when it was discovered some years ago by the authorities of Inland Revenue that these furnished houses, rent and rate free, were an addition to the stipends, they charged income-tax on them, and the Wesleyan Church also pays that income-tax.

In addition to the support of their Ministers the bodies to which I am referring in England and Scotland—and I do not exclude Ireland, for there is no class by whom there are greater sacrifices made than by the peasantry of Ireland for the support of the Roman Catholic clergy—bear their fair share of all the other extraneous charitable contributions which fall on their shoulders. They do not regard it as a burden—they regard it as a duty—to support their ministers—their churches—their schools—their missions—and all other departments of their church organisation; and is it right, is it fair, is it just that you should impose new taxation upon them, for that is what it amounts to—diverted taxation once raised is precisely the same as if you impose new taxation—in addition to the burdens that they already bear? I say, in conclusion—and I apologise for having trespassed so much upon the time which belongs to the right hon. Gentleman opposite—that the Church of England can—and if this enfeebling idea of rate aided support can be got rid of will—do its duty to its clergy and will relieve them from a cruel and heavy burden. I admit there is a hard case. I admit it entirely. I have not had time to dwell upon it as I intended to. The real and true cause, is the heavy fall in the money value of the tithe commutation rent-charge. That is the real grievance; but 1s. or 1s. 3d. in the £ on the rates will not touch that sad diminution in clerical income. I say that the Church of England, if properly appealed to, will relieve its poor clergymen from this reduction of their stipends, and will show that, while the Anglican Church surpasses all other Churches combined in its unrivalled resources, it will equal them in the just and generous discharge of all its obligations.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (MR. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I think those who, like myself, have had the duty imposed upon them of following out the course of this Debate, will admit that the speech to which we have just listened is in happy contrast in tone and temper to some of the speeches which have been delivered both to-night and on the preceding occasion. It is quite true that towards the end of his speech the right hon. Gentleman, who is, after all, human, could not resist a little elec-

tioning, and that he terminated his observations by a parallel between the English Church and the Nonconformist bodies, to the disadvantage of the former communion. I think the right hon. Gentleman is most unjust to the English Church. I have no means of comparing the relative liberality of members of the Church of England and of the Nonconformist bodies, and I do not go the length of saying, indeed I do not think, that the laity of the Church of England in all respects show themselves equal to the great responsibilities thrown upon them. But that Church contributed for Church purposes, I believe, something over £7,000,000 last year, and £7,500,000 in the year 1897–98, to her purposes, and, though that may be a less sum than the members of that Church ought to contribute, I do not think it is a niggardly contribution. But it is hardly necessary for me to enter a caveat against the suggestion that the English Established Church comes forward at the present moment to ask for alms of this House. The claim she makes may be just, or it may be unjust—I shall argue that question directly; but the basis of that claim, be it sound or unsound, is a claim of justice and not a claim of pity. And certainly I should think myself quite unworthy of the task which has been laid upon me if I were for one moment to suggest that we come to the taxpayers of this country as beggars for alms and not as claimants for justice. Before I dwell any further upon that, which is, after all, the central citadel of the case, let me deal briefly with three attacks which have appeared in almost every speech made from the other side of the House. The first of those attacks is that we have based our proposals upon an interim Report of the Royal Commission. I think that is a very absurd attack. The right hon. Gentlemen in most of their other speeches upon Royal Commissions have declared that they were an expedient of the Government for indefinitely deferring some difficult question which ought to be dealt with. No doubt the result of a very prolonged inquiry is that the consideration by this House of a question is deferred from year to year. Well, is it not a very great advantage to get over that difficulty by having a Report upon any branch of the general topic which can, with advantage and propriety, be dealt with separately? I do not admit that the procedure of the Government

with regard to the Royal Commission has been in any way improper. It appears admirably suited to carry out the general objects for which that Commission was appointed. The second criticism that has been made seems to me, if I may venture to say so with all respect, even more frivolous. We have been attacked by almost every speaker, except the right hon. Gentleman, for introducing this Bill under Standing Order No. 16, and thereby curtailing, no doubt, the Debate on the First Reading. I think that accusation is made against us by hon. Gentlemen with that species of courage which is born of Parliamentary forgetfulness. They were constantly in the habit when they were in office of introducing in this way the most elaborate Bills—great factory measures, for instance, were introduced in this way by the right hon. Gentleman the late Home Secretary.

MR. ASQUITH (Fife, E.): Only non-controversial.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: "Controversial" is a very difficult term to define; they were complicated and elaborate measures upon which, no doubt, a great many gentlemen would have had something to say if the Bills had been introduced in the older fashion. I remember a case in which not, indeed, a Member of the Government, but an hon. Baronet opposite, one of the Members for Glasgow, introduced under this Standing Order No. 16 a measure for the disestablishment of the Scotch Church, and the whole of the front bench opposite without any exception supported him in the course he took and voted with him for the First Reading. I confess that for my own part a small readjustment of rating does seem to me rather less important and less controversial than the disestablishment of a national Church.

AN HON. MEMBER: It was not under this rule.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I say it was under this rule.

AN HON. MEMBER: It was not a Government Bill.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I never said it was a Government Bill, I said that it was *Mr. A. J. Balfour*.

introduced by the hon. Baronet, one of the Members for Glasgow, and that right hon. Gentlemen opposite supported him in the course he took and went into the Division lobby with him. The third of these subsidiary attacks which have reappeared at every phase of this discussion is in regard to the machinery we have adopted for remedying the injustice, as we think it, at the present moment of the position of the clergy. That method is to intercept a portion of the money which goes into the Local Taxation Account, and this has been attacked by hon. Gentlemen opposite as if it amounted to a breach of some great and accepted financial principle, as if it were intolerable that this House should come upon the fund for any purpose, however important, or however much it might affect the general community. Again, I say this is an accusation born of the shortness of political memory, because the machinery of the course we have adopted is one that we have borrowed in all respects from the procedure of right hon. Gentlemen opposite. They also intercepted this fund, and they intercepted it by a demand upon the fund far greater than that which this measure will make upon it. I forget the precise object for which they made the demand.

AN HON. MEMBER: Swine fever.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes, something about pigs. I must respectfully point out to the House that it appears to me quite as reasonable to take £87,000 a year from this fund in order to readjust on an equitable basis our local taxation, as to take twice that sum from the fund in order to deal with swine fever. I do not expect right hon. Gentlemen opposite to make the same balance of motive or estimate of importance as I do, but without balancing the relative importance of relieving an injustice to the clergy and of dealing with pigs, I am justified in pointing out that the machinery we have adopted can hardly be open to all the criticisms passed upon it, inasmuch as that machinery is borrowed without alteration from the procedure of right hon. Gentlemen opposite. I quite admit that these three points with which I have dealt are subsidiary points, they are to my mind relatively unimportant points, but they have bulked largely in this Debate, and I could not without disrespect to the House avoid touching

upon them. But having dealt with them briefly, though I hope not unsuccessfully, I proceed to touch on what I regard as the paramount questions. Let me say on this part of my case that I think hon. Gentlemen have been very unsuccessful in rebutting the weight of authority which stands on record in favour of the proposition that the existing rates press with undue severity upon the clergy. The right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down tried to minimise the weight of Mr. Gladstone's opinion by telling us that it was delivered on an exciting night at the end of a Budget Debate which had for its result the turning out of the Government of the day. Well, I do not know whether these considerations ought or ought not properly to be regarded as qualifying the importance of the statement which Mr. Gladstone made in 1851, but let me for the sake of argument, in order that I may not discuss that point, remind the House that that was not the last time nor the most important occasion on which Mr. Gladstone delivered an authoritative and considered judgment upon this point. A Bill was brought in in 1856 by Mr. Robert Phillimore, and its object was the same as the object of this Bill—namely, to diminish the burden of rates on the tithe-owning clergy. I am sure the House will take it from me that that was the object of the Bill; if they doubt it, I will read Mr. Robert Phillimore's speech. Let me read this brief passage from Mr. Gladstone's contribution to the debate:

“He would respectfully press upon the House that, after the universal admission which had been made as to the existence of the grievance which was the subject of the Bill, it would not be altogether creditable to allow small difficulties of detail and small differences of opinion to prevent the application of a remedy to that grievance.”

That was not a statement made on the Budget or in the heat of some great Party conflict, but a considered utterance upon the Second Reading of a Bill brought in for the very purpose for which we are introducing this Bill. And while we can quote on our side such a great authority in this matter as Mr. Gladstone, and while we can quote the various gentlemen of all shades of political opinion who have signed this Report, the industry of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite, which certainly leaves nothing to be desired, has not extracted one opinion in a contrary direction from any great authority on the

subject since 1836 to the present time. That is a presumption in favour of our Bill which it would take a great deal to get over. But how do they try to get over it? They tell us that the rates are exacted from the tithes according to law; and they quote a great many legal opinions which show conclusively that rates are levied at the present moment from the clergy strictly in accordance with the law. Yes, Sir, it is because it is in accordance with the law that we wish to change the law.

AN HON. MEMBER: You do not change the law; you give them a dole.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: We do propose to change the law. I never heard a Bill of this kind described as a Bill which did not change the law. Every Bill which becomes law alters the law, unless it is a mere superfluity. But a great deal too much attention has been paid to the *dicta* of courts of law and lawyers in this matter.

MR. ASQUITH: Oh!

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Well, that is my opinion. Lawyers and courts of law are very eminent authorities as to the verbal interpretation of Acts of Parliament. It is their business, and as long as they do it, it is not for poor laymen to say a word as to the way in which they do it, or as to the results which follow upon it. But I venture to think that we who are not lawyers or eminent judges are quite as well qualified, and even better qualified, to judge of the intentions of Parliament in passing the law. After all, we are occupied in passing laws ourselves, and we have open to us information which judges, quite rightly, by a self-denying ordinance refuse to consider. We have the Debates which precede the passage of the law, and we have collateral means at our disposal for discovering the intentions of the framers of the law. As far as I am able to understand the matter, the intentions of the legislature, from the Act of Elizabeth downwards, have been steadily thwarted by the courts of law—not with any corrupt motive, but the courts of law have not truly or accurately interpreted the intentions of the legislature which passed the laws. As far as I am able to form a judgment—and I do not see why I am not as competent to form a judgment in this matter as any gentleman

even with the highest legal training—the effect of this Bill will be, I will not say to bring the law precisely into harmony with the intentions of the framers of this or that Statute, but it will be to put the clerical tithe-payer in the position from which he ought never to have been excluded by the decision of the judges. I now pass to a criticism made by many speakers, but principally by the right hon. Member for Bodmin. The right hon. Gentleman is accustomed to criticise the procedure of the Party to which he belongs. We have in him that most valuable assistant — a candid friend always ready to tell us of our faults. But I sometimes think that he presses that congenial rôle almost to excess. We are accustomed to hear the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouth, in his easy and genial style, represent our arguments in a shape in which we are wholly unable to recognise even the most familiar friends. If he adopted any other course in our Debates we should not recognise our old antagonist, and we should think that his hand had lost its cunning. I am glad to say I see no sign of failure of that kind in the course of to-night's Debate. But we are not accustomed to have such eccentric views of the subject-matter of our Debates put forward by even the most candid of our friends as those we have heard from my right hon. friend the Member for Bodmin. He has advanced the most astounding proposition, as I think it—that you must not consider the rates to be paid by a clergyman at all; he is personally liable, no doubt, if they are not paid, but still you must not consider they are paid by him; they are first paid somehow or other, and then everything that remains over is his stipend and he has no right to complain of a rating system which diminishes that stipend or right to ask for a reform of the system of rating to increase it. If that doctrine is applicable at all it is applicable to every species of property, and not to tithe alone; and is it not obvious on the face of it that it is a preposterous proposition? Is it not obvious there could be no reform in our rating system if such a doctrine were really accepted? My right hon. friend has laid it down that any change in our rating system that diminishes the burden on any kind of property is an endowment of that property and *pro tanto* a robbery of other classes in the community. If

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that is so, then this House is incapable of reforming rating; the thing cannot be done. The only way to reform rating is to alter the incidence of rating, and, according to my right hon. friend, such alteration means the endowment of one set of people and the robbery of others. Does my right hon. friend think that that is tenable in argument, or that it is a principle that has ever been or can ever be accepted by the House? I may remind him of a few cases. In 1874 there was a great alteration in the incidence of rating of railway and other property in regard to certain classes of local taxation. Was that an endowment of railways? The thing is absurd. In 1845, I think it was, an Act was passed which made ministers of the Established Church of Scotland liable to pay poor-rates in proportion to their means and substance. It was an enabling Act; it gave the power to levy the rate to local authorities. That existed for twenty years, but in 1861 it was abolished, and members of the Scotch Church were relieved from that liability. Was that relief an endowment of the Church of Scotland? If it was, it was an endowment passed by the uncontaminated Liberal Party, to which my right hon. friend looks back with such an air of regret. Yes; my right hon. friend told us—I do not know if the House was as full then as now—that he looked back with regret to 1886, and I rather gathered from his observations on the general history of politics in this country, of which we have heard a good deal not very relevant to this Bill before us—I gathered from him that if an eminent statesman were willing to go back and frame a Ministry upon the principles that prevailed in 1886, my right hon. friend would be very glad to be in it. Let me take another case, which was referred to by the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down. He alluded to the Bill so often brought in and read a second time in this House—the Machinery Rating Bill. Now, the theory of my right hon. friend, and those who have echoed his sentiments, is that all rating is upon property; at all events, his view is that if you relieve one species of property of rates you are endowing the owners of that property. I confess I thought that was his view.

MR. COURTNEY: Of course it is impossible for me now to reopen my argu-

ment, but when my right hon. friend comes to see the full report of the Royal Commission on Local Taxation he will have an opportunity of reading a long argument of mine submitted at the request of the Commission, reconciling what he says is impossible—namely, respect for long-existing rates with the power of reconstruction of rates.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I can assure my right hon. friend I shall read with the utmost interest and attention his argument in the report to which he refers. I have not had the privilege of seeing it, so I can only found my answer to his speech upon the speech itself. Had I seen the document it would have given me infinite pleasure to have dealt with it to the best of my ability. My right hon. friend puts to me this dilemma. Supposing this Bill is passed, and supposing a liberal Member of the Church of England desires to increase the endowment of some particular church. Suppose, further, that, in order to carry out that object, he hands over to the clergyman a certain amount of tithe rent-charge which is in the hands of a lay proprietor. Would that tithe rent-charge be relieved of rates, or would it not? If it is relieved of rates, said my right hon. friend, then you are manifestly endowing the Church of England in such circumstances with a further endowment equal to half the rates. If, on the other hand, the tithe rent-charge is not relieved of half the rates, then are you not admitting that the logical basis of your Bill wholly falls? That, I think, was my right hon. friend's argument. He did me the honour to say that I was a person of great dialectical ability, and he waited with interest to see what answer I should give to this puzzle. But he forgot that I am also a Scotchman, and a Scotchman has, or is supposed to have, the habit of answering one question by putting another. I propose to answer that question by putting another. At the present moment, though the fact has been forgotten in this Debate, every Nonconformist place of worship throughout the kingdom is relieved of rates.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: As well as the churches.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Of course; concurrent endowment. I put this to my

right hon. friend, who is not less dialectically endowed than I am—supposing a piece of land is given, as it is given every day, for the building of a Nonconformist place of worship. That piece of land before it is given is liable to rates. As soon as it is given and the place of worship is built it ceases to be liable for rates. Now I should like to know how my right hon. friend deals with that problem.

MR. COURTNEY: My right hon. friend has himself given the answer; it is a concurrent endowment.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: My right hon. friend is perfectly correct, it is a concurrent endowment; and the difference between the two cases is this—that while, as far as we can judge from experience, the number of persons who choose the machinery of handing over tithe for the purpose of augmenting a living is extremely small, the number of persons who hand over land to build a Nonconformist chapel upon is, I am glad to think, very many. It makes no difference whether the land is sold or handed over for the purposes of my argument, and my right hon. friend's candid interruption brings me to a point which demolishes nine-tenths—and the most telling nine-tenths—of the arguments we have heard in this Debate. Hon. Gentlemen opposite have told us that whenever, at the cost of the general ratepayer, you relieve the Church of England of rates you are endowing that Church. I have heard that statement made by every speaker, and it has been usually the one statement which has brought down vociferous cheers from the gentlemen sitting on the other side of the House. How do they deal with this? They have even quarrelled with this freedom from rates enjoyed by Nonconformist chapels. They have told us that the Church of England might grovel for money, but the Nonconformist bodies were too noble to do so. Has the right hon. gentleman, who boasts, and boasts so justly, of the liberality of the great communion to which he belongs, ever protested against this? If so, he has protested in silence. The Act which frees these places of worship—and, in my judgment, quite rightly—from rates was passed, I believe, in 1844 or 1845. It has been in undisputed and increasing employment ever since. Every Nonconfor-

mist chapel which has been built since then, and every chapel which was built before then, which is still in existence, constitutes or obtains an endowment from the State at the expense of the ratepayers, according to the argument which has been urged in season and out of season. This may be a problem the solution of which is not easy, but, in Heaven's name, let us hear no more of this trash about endowments. Let the House notice that, while we ask only for a readjustment of rates, which, in our judgment, ought not to be described as an endowment, this freeing places of worship from rates is an endowment in any sense in which the word can be used, and is admitted to be an endowment even by so candid a friend of the Government as the right hon. Member for Bodmin. Therefore, let us argue the question henceforth on a somewhat different basis from that employed these last two days, and not lower the tone of our Debates by attacking the Church of England for its want of public spirit when, so far as I know, not a single Nonconformist has ever suggested that they should reject the rate aid given by the Act to which I have referred, and which is undoubtedly endowment in its purest and nakedest form. I should like every hon. Gentleman who proposes to vote against this Bill to ask himself whether, if there were any other class than the clergy of the Church of England suffering under this kind of disability, they would either make the speeches they have or give the votes they propose to give. Here you have, side by side, a man bound to do certain clerical work for, let us say, a nominal stipend of £400 a year. You have next door a Civil servant living in a similar house, under similar conditions. The one pays £5 a year to the rates, the other pays £50 a year to the rates. Each gets precisely the same benefit from the expenditure of the local rates, the same amount of police protection, the same accommodation in the way of roads, lighting, and all the other matters for which rates are paid. Is it not inevitable that in the minds of those overtaxed a feeling of soreness should arise? Is it not inevitable that he should come to this House—which, perhaps, until the speeches we have recently had he regarded as one of the fountains of justice—and ask that something should be done to relieve him? I have heard hon. Gentlemen lament over the poverty in which too

many of the clergy of the Church of England are at present plunged, and tell us how grieved they are at the condition of things, and how much they think the spiritual efficiency of the Church is injured by the straitened means of those who have the care of its ministrations. I do not for a moment doubt the sincerity of these observations, though they do come oddly from those whose most earnest efforts are directed towards depriving the same clergy of all the endowments which at present they enjoy. But, though I do not doubt for a moment the sincerity of what has been said, I confess I do feel that at the bottom of the opposition to this Bill is not any theory of rating such as that of my right hon. friend, not any regard for the interests of the ratepayers at whose cost it is alleged this reform will take place, but a deep-rooted animosity to the Church of England. I listened with the interest which I always feel to the speech made by the hon. Gentleman the Member for West Fife. The hon. Gentleman never seems able to forget the ancient controversies between the Church and Nonconformity. He speaks with a bitterness upon these subjects, as if it was the morrow of that unhappy day when 2,000 of the Presbyterian clergy were turned out shortly after the Restoration. Can he not let these "old, unhappy, far-off things" be forgotten once for a while? Can he not feel that, bitter as those contests may have been, and unhappy as their results have undoubtedly been, they may now be allowed to slumber? I do not know whether the great Nonconformist divines—uncompromising Calvinists as they were—would have regarded the hon. Gentleman as their legitimate spiritual successor; but, whether he has inherited their doctrines or not, why should he inherit their controversies? Have we not reached, or may we not reach, a more peaceable age in which questions between one Christian sect and another may be dealt with without that bitterness which has flavoured too many of the orations we have heard from the other side? Sir, hon. Gentlemen have told us in terms of ill-conceived triumph that the cause we are now championing is an unpopular cause, that the clergy of the Church of England, and for various reasons, are not now a popular body. What we are doing may be easily perverted at the hustings, and in their judgment, at all events, we are doing

Mr. A. J. Balfour.

little by the measure we are now pressing forward to, in the vulgar phrase, catch votes. That may be so, and yet I think that when the country has time to consider the claim that we make, and when they see that it is based upon justice, it may be that the prophecy of hon. Gentlemen opposite will not find a ready fulfilment. But let us suppose that their view is correct. They intend, I presume, or profess now that they will let this Bill, which only runs two years and a-half, die a natural death without renewal, and I presume they will mete out the same justice or injustice to the Rating Bill, of which we heard so much in 1896. I do not hear that prophecy of their policy received with the applauding cheers which I expected. One courageous gentleman, indeed, did interrupt me with loud applause, but there was an ominous silence brooding over the other Benches on his side of the House, and I venture to think that when the time comes we may not hear, perhaps, on the hustings of this country these loud attacks on this Bill we have heard to-night, or any specific or formal promise on the part of the leaders of the Opposition that they mean to reverse the system which this Bill and the other Rating Bill have introduced. I have many reasons for doubting that view. Perhaps the House will allow me to read one which has been given to me by an hon. friend of mine who was concerned in an election in June, 1898—my hon. friend the Member for Hertfordshire. I have been given a circular issued, as

I understand, by the Hertford Central Liberal Association. It states:

"The present Government, which holds office largely owing to the support of the clergy, have done nothing for them in respect of rates, and still refuse to do anything. Although every £100 of tithe rent-charge is now worth only £65, they have still to pay heavy local rates, which further diminishes their declining incomes. Briefly stated, the grievances of the clergy are as follows:—(1) their houses are over-assessed; (2) their tithe endowments are over-rated; (3) the tithe-owning ratepayer ought to be as considerably treated as the land-owning ratepayer. Why should the clergy support the Unionist candidate at the present election? Why not vote for the Right Hon. C. Robert Spencer?"

Well, Sir, I cannot concur with the advice given at the end of that extract, but the sentiments contained in the earlier part of it seem unexceptionable. I entirely agree with Hertford Central Liberal Committee, and I am convinced that as the Hertford Central Liberal Committee think to-day the general Liberal Party will think to-morrow, and that when they, in common with the rest of the country, really consider the position in which these clergy are placed, they will, not indeed on grounds of charity, but spurred on by a legitimate feeling for poverty and straitened means, concur with the policy which this Government has adopted, and which I earnestly trust before this session ends we shall see carried to a complete and satisfactory issue.

The House divided:—Ayes, 314; Noes, 176. (Division List, No. 210.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
Aird, John
Allhusen, Augustus Henry E.
Allsopp, Hon. George
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arnold, Alfred
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. J. FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baillie, James E. B. (Inverness)
Baird, John George A.
Balcarras, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manc)
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (Leeds)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barnes, Frederic Gorell
Barry, Rt. Hn. A. H. S. (Hunts)
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Winds'r

Bartley, George C. T.
Barton, Dunbar Plunket
Bathurst, Hn. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Brs't'l
Beach, W. W. Brainston (Hants)
Beckett, Ernest William
Begg, Ferdinand Faithfull
Bemrose, Sir Henry Howe
Beresford Lord Charles
Bethell, Commander
Bhownaggee, Sir M. M.
Biddulph, Michael
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blakiston-Houston, John
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bonsor, Henry Cosmo Orme
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bousfield, William Robert
Bowles, Captain H. F. (M'd'l'x

Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, A Montagu
Bullard, Sir Harry
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Carlile, William Walter
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbsh.)
Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, East)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (Greenwich)
Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Wrecr.
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Chelsea, Viscount
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clarke, Sir E. (Plymouth)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William

Coghill, Douglas Harry
 Cohen, Benjamin Louis
 Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
 Colomb, Sir John Charles R.
 Colston, C. E. H. Athole
 Compton, Lord Alwyne
 Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
 Cornwallis, Fienes Stanley W.
 Cotton-Jodrell, Col. Edw. T. D.
 Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
 Cranborne, Viscount
 Cripps, Charles Alfred
 Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
 Cruddas, William Donaldson
 Cubitt, Hon. Henry
 Curzon, Viscount
 Dalrymple, Sir Charles
 Davies, Sir H. D. (Chatham)
 Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
 Digby, John K. D. Wingfield-
 Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
 Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred. Dixon
 Dorington, Sir John Edward
 Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
 Doxford, William Theodore
 Drage, Geoffrey
 Dyke, Rt. Hn. Sir William Hart
 Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
 Elliot, Hn. A. Ralph Douglas
 Fardell, Sir T. George
 Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
 Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Manc'r.
 Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
 Finch, George H.
 Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
 Firbank, Joseph Thomas
 Fisher, William Hayes
 Fison, Frederick William
 FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose-
 FitzWygram, General Sir F.
 Fletcher, Sir Henry
 Flower, Ernest
 Folkestone, Viscount
 Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
 Galloway, William Johnson
 Garrit, William
 Gedge, Sydney
 Gibbons, J. Lloyd
 Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lond
 Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
 Giles, Charles Tyrrell
 Gilliat, John Saunders
 Godson, Sir Augustus Fred.
 Goldsworthy, Major-General
 Gordon, Hon. John Edward
 Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
 Goschen, Rt. Hn. G. J. (St. George's
 Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
 Goulding, Edward Alfred
 Graham, Henry Robert
 Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
 Green, Walford D. (Wednesbury
 Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury
 Gull, Sir Cameron
 Gunter, Colonel
 Hall, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
 Halsey, Thomas Frederick
 Hamilton, Rt. Hn. Lord George
 Hambury, Rt. Hon. Rbt. Wm.
 Hanson, Sir Reginald
 Hardy, Laurence
 Hare, Thomas Leigh
 Haslett, Sir James Horner
 Hatch, Ernest Fred. George
 Heath, James

Helder, Augustus
 Henderson, Alexander
 Hickman, Sir Alfred
 Hill, Arthur (Down, West)
 Hill, Sir Edward Stock (Bris.)
 Hoare, Edw. Brodie (Hampst'd)
 Hoare, Samuel (Norwich)
 Hobhouse, Henry
 Holland, Hon. L. R. (Bow)
 Hornby, Sir William Henry
 Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
 Houston, R. P.
 Howard, Joseph
 Howell, William Tudor
 Howorth, Sir Henry Hoyle
 Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
 Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn
 Hughes Colonel Edwin
 Hutchinson, Capt. G. W. Grice-
 Hutton, John (Yorks. N. R.)
 Jackson, Rt. Hn. Wm. Lawies
 Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
 Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
 Jenkins, Sir John Jones
 Johnston, William (Belfast)
 Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
 Jolliffe, Hon. H. George
 Kemp, George
 Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H.
 Kenyon, James
 Kenyon-Slaney, Col. William
 Keswick, William
 Kimber, Henry
 King, Sir Henry Seymour
 Knowles, Lees
 Lafone, Alfred
 Laurie, Lieut.-General
 Lawrence, W. F. (Liverpool)
 Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
 Lecky, Rt. Hn. William E. H.
 Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
 Leighton, Stanley
 Llewellyn, Evan H. (Somerset
 Llewellyn, Sir Dillwyn (Sw'n's a
 Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
 Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
 Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
 Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Liverpool)
 Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
 Lorne, Marquess of
 Lowe, Francis William
 Lowles, John
 Loyd, Archie Kirkman
 Lubbock, Rt. Hon. Sir John
 Lucas-Shadwell, William
 Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
 Macartney, W. G. Ellison
 Macdonald, John Cumming
 MacIver, David (Liverpool)
 Maclean, James Mackenzie
 Maclure, Sir John William
 McArthur, Charles (Liverpool)
 McCalmont, Col. J. (Antrim, E.)
 McIver, Sir Lewis (Edin'burgh W.
 Malcolm, Ian
 Manners, Lord Edward W. J.
 Maple, Sir John Blundell
 Martin, Richard Biddulph
 Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
 Maxwell, Rt. Hn. Sir Herbert E.
 Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
 Melville, Beresford Valentine
 Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
 Milbank, Sir Powlett Chas. Jhn.
 Mildmay, Francis Bingham

Milner, Sir Frederick George
 Milward, Colonel Victor
 Monckton, Edward Philip
 Monk, Charles James
 Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants.
 Moon, Edward Robert Percy
 Moore, William (Antrim, N.)
 More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire
 Morgan, Hn. F. (Monm'thsh.)
 Morrell, George Herbert
 Morrison, Walter
 Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford
 Mount, William George
 Muntz, Philip A.
 Murray, Rt. Hn. A. G. (Bute)
 Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
 Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
 Myers, William Henry
 Newark, Viscount
 Nicholson, William Graham
 Nicol, Donald Ninian
 Northcote, Hon. Sir H. Stafford
 O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
 Pease, Herbert P. (Darlington)
 Penn, John
 Percy, Earl
 Pierpoint, Robert
 Pilkington, R. (Lancs., Newton)
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Pollock, Harry Frederick
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Priestley, Sir W. O. (Edinburgh
 Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
 Purvis, Robert
 Pym, C. Guy
 Quilter, Sir Cuthbert
 Rankin, Sir James
 Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
 Rentoul, James Alexander
 Richards, Henry Charles
 Riddle, Rt. Hn. Sir Matthew W.
 Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
 Robertson, H. (Hackney)
 Robinson, Brooke
 Rou d, James
 Royds, Clement Molyneux
 Russell, Gen. F. S. (Cheltenham)
 Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
 Rutherford, John
 Ryder, John Herbert Dudley
 Samuel, H. S. (Limehouse)
 Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
 Savory, Sir Joseph
 Seoble, Sir Andrew Richard
 Seely, Charles Hilton
 Seton-Karr, Henry
 Sharpe, William Edward T.
 Sidebottom, J. W. (Cheshire)
 Sidebottom, T. H. (Stalybridge)
 Simeon, Sir Barington
 Skewes Cox, Thomas
 Smith, Jas. Parker (Lanark.)
 Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
 Soames, Arthur Wellesley
 Stanley, Hon. A. (Ormskirk)
 Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
 Stanley, Henry M. (Lambeth)
 Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
 Stephens, Henry Charles
 Stewart, Sir Mark J. M. Taggart
 Stock, James Henry
 Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
 Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier

Sutherland, Sir Thomas
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Ox. Univ.)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Usborne, Thomas
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Ward, Hon. Robert A. (Crewe)

Warde, Lieut.-Col. C. E. (Kent)
Warr, Augustus Frederick
Webster, R. G. (St. Pancras)
Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
Wentworth, Bruce C. Vernon-
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Williams, Joseph Powell (Birm)
Wilcox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm

Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart-
Wyndham, George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy
Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
Young, Commander (Berks, E.)
Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Sir William Walrond and
Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Rhondla)
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, Wm. (Newc.-u.-Lyne)
Allison, Robert Andrew
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbert H.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Austin, M.
Rainbridge, Emerson
Baker, Sir John
Balfour, Rt. Hn. J. Blair (Clackm.)
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Augustine
Blake, Edward
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Sir Charles (Glasgow)
Cameron, Robert (Durham)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carmichael, Sir T. D. Gibson-
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Clark, Dr. G. B. (Caithness-sh.)
Clough, Walter Owen
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Courtney, Rt. Hon. Leonard H.
Crilly, Daniel
Crombie, John William
Curran, Thomas (Sligo, S.)
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan)
Davitt, Michael
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, Arthur
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Owen Morgan
Ellis, John Edward
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Evans, Sir Francis H. (South'ton)
Evershed, Sydney
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmund

Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Fox, Dr. Joseph Francis
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gold, Charles
Gourley, Sir Edward T.
Grey, Sir Edward (Berwick)
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir William Brampton
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm.
Harwood, George
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hazzell, Walter
Hedderwick, Thos. Chas. H.
Hemphill, Rt. Hn. Charles H.
Hogau, James Francis
Hoiden, Sir Angus
Holland, Wm. H. (York, W. R.)
Horniman, Frederick John
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Johnson-Ferguson, Jabez Edw.
Jones, David B. (Swansea)
Jones, Wm. (Carmarvonshire)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Kitson, Sir James
Labouchere, Henry
Langley, Batty
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumb'land)
Leese, Sir J. F. (Accrington)
Leng, Sir John
Leuty, Thomas Richmond
Lloyd-George, David
Logan, John William
Lough, Thomas
Lyell, Sir Leonard
MacAleese, Daniel
MacDonnell, Dr. M. A. (Q. C.)
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
Mac'rae, George
McEwan, William
McGhee, Richard
McKenna, Reginald
McLaren, Charles Benjamin
McLeod, John
Maddison, Fred.
Mappin, Sir Fredk. Thorpe
Mellor, Rt. Hn. J. W. (Yorks)
Mendl, Sigismund Ferdinand
Montagu, Sir S. (Whitechapel)
Morgan, W. Pritchard (Merthyr)
Morley, Charles (Breckonshire)

Morley, Rt. Hon. J. (Montrose)
Moulton, John Fletcher
Murnaghan, George
Murnaghan, C. pt. Cecil Williams
Nusey, Thomas Willans
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
Oldroyd, Mark
O'Malley, William
Palmer, Sir C. M. (Durham)
Palmer, G. Wm. (Reading)
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
Pease, Joseph A. (Northumb.)
Pease, Sir J. W. (Durham)
Perks, Robert William
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pilkington, Sir J. A. (Lancs SW)
Pirie, Duncan V.
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Briggs (Yorks.)
Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
Randell, David
Reckitt, Harold James
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Samuel J. (Stockton on Tees)
Schwann, Charles E.
Scott, Chas. Prestwich (Leigh)
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sinclair, Capt. Jn. (Forfarshire)
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Souttar, Robinson
Spicer, Albert
Stanhope, Hon. Philip J.
Steadman, William Charles
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Edward
Stuart, James (Shoreditch)
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Sullivan, T. D. (Donegal, W.)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, Alf. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David Alfd. (Merthyr)
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Wallace, Robert
Walton, John L. (Leeds, S.)
Warner, Thos. Courtenay T.
Wedderburn, Sir William
Weir, James Galloway
Whiteley, George (Stockport)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, John Carvell (Notts.)

Wills, Sir William Henry

Wilson, Charles Henry (Hull)

Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)

Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)

Wilson, John (Govan)

Wilson, J. W. (Worcstrsh. N.)

Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Hudd'rsfd)

Woods, Samuel

Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—

Mr. Herbert Gladstone and

Mr. M'Arthur.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Thursday next.

REFORMATORY SCHOOLS AMEND-
MENT BILL [Lords].

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed,
"That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. DALZIEL : (Kirkcaldy Burghs)
I have an Amendment on the Paper to refer this Bill to a Select Committee, but I understand that the Bill itself will be of so much use to our English friends on this side of the House that I prefer to do nothing which would delay its passage.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

Adjourned at twenty minutes
before One of the clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, 30th June 1899.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

GODALMING CORPORATION WATER BILL.

Witnesses ordered to attend the Select Committee.

WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL BILL.

Committed: The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

IONIAN BANK BILL.

Committed.

LINCOLN AND EAST COAST RAILWAY AND DOCK BILL.

Committee to meet on Tuesday next.

BIRMINGHAM CORPORATION BILL.

Committee to meet on Monday next.

GAS LIGHT AND COKE COMPANY BILL.

Report from the Select Committee, That it is not expedient to proceed further with the Bill; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

TAFF VALE RAILWAY BILL.

Reported with Amendments.

NORTH-WEST LONDON RAILWAY BILL.

[ON RE-COMMITMENT.]

Reported with further Amendments.

WESTON-SUPER-MARE GRAND PIER BILL [Lords].

Read 3^a and passed, and sent to the Commons.

WORKINGTON CORPORATION BILL [Lords].

Read 3^a; Amendments made; Bill passed, and sent to the Commons.

SHIREBROOK AND DISTRICT GAS BILL.

Read 3^a, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

NOTTINGHAM CORPORATION BILL.

Read 3^a, with the Amendments; further Amendments made; Bill passed and returned to the Commons.

VOL. LXXIII. [FOURTH SERIES.]

LONDON, CHATHAM, AND DOVER RAILWAY BILL.

BELFAST WATER BILL.

WEST MIDDLESEX WATER BILL.

CENTRAL ELECTRIC SUPPLY BILL.

Read 3^a, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

MILLWALL DOCK BILL.

Brought from the Commons; read 1^a, and referred to the Examiners.

EDINBURGH CORPORATION BILL.

WETHERBY DISTRICT WATER BILL.

Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to.

AIRDRIE AND COATBRIDGE WATER BILL [Lords].

GAINSBOROUGH URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL (GAS) BILL [Lords].

WICK AND PULTENEY HARBOURS BILL [Lords].

Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments: the said Amendments considered and agreed to.

BRISTOL GAS BILL [Lords].

DUNDEE GAS, STREET IMPROVEMENTS, AND TRAMWAYS BILL [Lords].

Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments.

BELFAST CORPORATION BILL.

DUBLIN CORPORATION (MARKETS) BILL.

DUBLIN CORPORATION BILL.

Report from the Committee of Selection that the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills, viz.: D. Northumberland (Chairman), E. Ellesmere, L. Braye, L. Middleton, and L. Aberdare; agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly. The Committee to meet on Tuesday next at Eleven o'clock; and all Petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 4) BILL.

Committed: The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

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An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 5) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 7) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 8) BILL.

House to be in Committee on Monday next.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 9) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 11) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (GAS) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (HOUSING OF WORKING CLASSES) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (POOR LAW) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 1) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 3) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES) (No. 2) BILL.

House to be in Committee on Monday next.

GAS ORDERS CONFIRMATION (No. 2) BILL [Lords].

Amendments reported (according to order); and Bill to be read 3a on Monday next.

TRAMWAYS ORDERS CONFIRMATION (No. 2) BILL [Lords].

TRAMWAYS ORDERS CONFIRMATION (No. 3) BILL [Lords].

Read 3^a (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 16) BILL.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 7) BILL.

House in Committee (according to order): Bill reported without amendment: Standing Committee negatived; and Bills to be read 3^a on Monday next.

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

ROYAL NIGER COMPANY.

Letter from the Foreign Office to the Treasury, dated 15th June, 1899, with respect to the revocation of the Charter of the Royal Niger Company, and to the taking over by Her Majesty's Government of the administrative rights and powers of the Company, together with copies of the Treasury Minute on the subject, dated 30th June, 1899, and relative schedules. Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP (EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN OVERTIME IN WASHING BOTTLES, ETC.).

Order made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department, extending to factories and workshops in which the washing of bottles for use in the preserving of fruit is carried on, the special exception with respect to the employment of women overtime contained in Section 53 of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1878, as amended by Sections 14 and 37 of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1895.

WOODS, FORESTS, AND LAND REVENUES.

Seventy-seventh Report of the Commissioners, dated 29th June, 1899; laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

PETITIONS

VIVISECTION.

Petition for suppression of the practice of; of the Pioneer Anti-Vivisection Society; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

SEATS FOR SHOP ASSISTANTS (ENGLAND AND IRELAND) BILL.

Petition in favour of; of the Sanitary Institute; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

OYSTERS BILL [Lords].

Petition in favour of; of the Sanitary Institute; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

EDUCATION OF CHILDREN BILL.

SECOND READING.

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

*VISCOUNT KNUTSFORD: My Lords, it is with confidence that I ask your Lordships to give a Second Reading to

this Bill, because it is in no sense a party measure, while at the same time it is of considerable importance, and a step in the right direction in improving the education of the children in our schools. That it is not a party measure can be gathered from the fact that the principle of the Bill, that of raising the age of exemption from eleven to twelve years, was adopted in the Education Bill of 1897, which was brought into Parliament by Her Majesty's present Government. That Bill, however, only got to Second Reading, and this year the hon. Member for South Shields (Mr. Robson), a member of the Opposition, introduced that principle into the Bill which I am now conducting through your Lordships' House. The Bill was passed in the House of Commons by a majority of Members on both sides of the House. Therefore, I think I may fairly say that this is not a party measure, and I hope I shall be able to convince your Lordships that it is a very important Bill in the cause of education. The present law as regards half-timers is that when a child has attained a certain age, which is fixed by Parliament, it is able to claim partial exemption if it passes a standard of examination which is fixed by the local authorities, not by Parliament, and which therefore varies in different districts. I think it must be admitted, both from experience in this country and on the Continent, that the half-time system is absolutely necessary, both in manufacturing and agricultural districts. At the same time it must be admitted that the half-time system is disadvantageous to children from the educational point of view. That is not to be wondered at when your Lordships consider the kind of work that children in manufacturing districts have to do. A child that has worked four or five hours in a mill in the morning is naturally somewhat tired, languid, and inattentive to its lessons in school in the afternoon, and it is found that in alternate weeks, when the school work is in the morning and the mill work in the afternoons, the half-timers do not give that attention to their books which the other children do. Experience shows that children who go to work as half-timers are much less capable of receiving instruction than those who go through a regular course of school education. Tests have shown that the half-timer very soon falls

behind other school children in educational progress. I will venture to quote to your Lordships a case which was referred to in the House of Commons, and I do so the more readily because the facts of that case afford a sufficient answer to the main argument adduced by the opponents of this measure—that it is most important that children at the earliest age possible should acquire a technical knowledge of the work, whether in the mills or in the field, which they would probably have to take up when they left school. The case to which I allude is known as the Bolton case. In Bolton there are 538 technical knowledge scholarships, and something between 3,000 and 4,000 half-timers, and yet out of all those scholarships only one child who had been a half-timer secured one, and at the time he secured that scholarship he was not a half-timer. That shows very distinctly that there is a disadvantage from an educational point of view in the half-time system, and it follows that the age of partial exemption ought to be raised as high as possible consistently with the efficient working of the half-time system. Those who are interested in education must have been gratified to see the great change of opinion that has taken place in favour of raising the school exemption age, both in the agricultural and manufacturing districts. I can speak upon this point with some confidence, because when I had the honour of being Vice-President of the Council in 1885 and 1886 the school age exemption was ten, and the educational standard, which, as I have told your Lordships, is fixed by the local authorities, was the second standard in the agricultural districts, and the third, and sometimes the fourth, but generally the third, in the manufacturing districts. Your Lordships know how small is the amount of knowledge required in a child to pass these standards, and, coupling that with the fact that the standard of age exemption was ten years, you will readily understand what a deplorable state of things existed in those days from an educational point of view. Yet, after very careful inquiry, the matter having been brought under the attention of the then Lord President of the Council and myself, it was found that in both the agricultural and the manufacturing districts there was so strong an opinion against raising the age that it would have

been difficult—I might almost say impossible—for a Government to have introduced and carried a measure to effect that purpose. Nor, indeed, were we more fortunate in endeavouring to induce the local authorities to raise their educational standard. They declined to do so, and matters had to be left as they were. It was not until 1891, under the Factory Act, that some advance was made in this direction. There was a clause introduced into that Act which prohibited the employment of children in factories and workshops under the age of eleven years. That clause was not introduced for educational purposes, but for the natural and desirable purpose of improving the health and the condition of the children who were employed in factories and workshops. At the same time, I think that that legislation in 1891, although for a different object, facilitated very much the raising of the age in the Education Act which was passed in 1893. Happily, since that time there has been a further change of opinion—as the saying is, much water has flowed under the bridge since then—and so great has been the change of opinion that it has been possible to introduce this measure into Parliament, raising the age from eleven to twelve years. I may be asked how we can test the change of opinion. In the first place, I should say we may test it by the very slight opposition which was given to this measure in the House of Commons. It was introduced by Mr. Robson in a speech of great ability, and the facts were put forward by the hon. Member in a temperate manner. I should like, in passing, to join with Sir John Gorst and Sir William Harcourt in paying my humble tribute of praise to the admirable tact and judgment with which Mr. Robson steered the Bill through the House of Commons. The Bill was opposed mainly by some Lancashire Members who represented the textile industries, but it must not be supposed that the manufacturing interests of the entire county of Lancashire are opposed to this measure, because it will be seen that as many Lancashire Members were found in the majority which supported the Bill as were against it in the minority. I believe also that the Lancashire Members who spoke in support of the measure were as many in number as those who opposed it. The Bill passed the Second Reading by a majority of 317 against 59, and many of those fifty-nine Members, who repre-

sented agricultural districts, were satisfied at a later stage with the proviso which has been introduced into the Bill, and to which I shall have to call attention in a few minutes, and supported the Bill. All attempts to restrict the measure in Committee were defeated by large majorities, and in the result the Third Reading was carried without a Division. Another test as to the change of public opinion is that many persons who were opposed to raising the age in 1893, and who prophesied evil results from such a course, have since found that their prophecies have been falsified and are now very warm supporters of the Bill. Another test, and a very important one, is that those interested in education—those most capable of forming an opinion, because they themselves are well acquainted with the course of teaching in the schools, heartily support this Bill. The teachers are unanimous in favour of raising the age from eleven to twelve years. No doubt they would like to see it raised even higher, because they believe that the half-time system is not only injurious to the half-time children, but affects the other children in the school, as it tends to interrupt the regular course of instruction and to necessitate many lessons being taught over again. They hail this measure as a step in the right direction. Managers of schools and inspectors of schools are also unanimous in favour of raising the age of exemption; and, therefore, it may be confidently asserted that we have a strong body of men—men most competent to judge—supporting this Bill. I desire also to point out, as a further reason for passing this Bill, that in raising the age we are really fulfilling pledges which were given by this country through its representatives at the Conference at Berlin in 1890. I have often heard it said that this country was under no pledge in this matter. I agree that we were under no legal pledge, but to show that we were under a moral pledge I will venture to read to your lordships a passage from a speech made in the other House by Sir John Gorst, one of our representatives at that Conference. Sir John Gorst said:

“We went to the Berlin Conference rather with a view to inducing the other nations in Europe to adopt the same restrictions upon textile and other manufactures which, it was represented, were some burden on British trade. The only point in which we were behind many of the nations of Europe was the age at which we allowed children to take part

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in these industries, and it was thought at the time to be a very good bargain for this country to do away with the advantage of juvenile labour in order to obtain from the other nations of Europe the regulations which we consented to at that Conference."

As the other nations have performed their undertaking, the time has arrived when we should attempt to give effect to what I cannot but consider was a pledge on our part to raise the age of exemption. The proviso in this Bill to which I have alluded provides that—

"The local authority for any district may, by bye-law for any parish within their district, fix thirteen years as the minimum age for exemption from school attendance in the case of children to be employed in agriculture, and in such parish such children over eleven and under thirteen years of age who have passed the standard fixed for partial exemption from school attendance by the bye-laws of the local authority shall not be required to attend school more than two hundred and fifty times in any year."

As everyone must see, there is a great distinction between the case of children in agricultural districts and those in manufacturing districts. The distinction is quite sufficient to justify different treatment, and, if necessary, the application of certain provisions in the one case which are not required in, and perhaps would not be applicable to the other case. Although many sanitary improvements have been made in the mills, the work there cannot be said to improve the health of the children. The converse is the case with regard to the work done by children in the fields and in the open air. Their health is improved, and they are thus more capable of receiving instruction. Again, the work in the mills goes on day after day throughout the year uninterrupted, in fine weather or bad, in sunshine or rain. This is not so in the case of agricultural work. This proviso, which was carried in the House of Commons by a majority of 245 to 26, and is made with the approval of all the Members for the agricultural districts, only deals with agricultural work, and is optional. It is intended to meet the special wants of agriculture. During certain months of the year in these rural districts children are required by farmers, and so strong is the feeling in these districts, and so urgent is the case, that it is found very difficult to enforce attendance of children in schools. The school attendance officers shut their eyes to what is going on when the education of children is neglected by their parents, and are loth to issue summonses

upon them for the non-attendance of their children at school. Magistrates, also, during those months instead of inflicting fines upon parents, are content to give them a caution. Therefore there is good reason for making a change in the direction of this proviso. I will read to your Lordships a passage, bearing out what I have just stated, from the speech delivered by Mr. Robson in the House of Commons. He was commenting upon some returns of attendances in rural schools, and said—

"Whereas one school in a rural district had been open 338 times, the attendances of various children had averaged from 54 to 64, and a little judicious inquiry brought to light the fact that the children had been actually employed on the land illegally by members of the School Board for that district. In another school, out of 442 possible attendances, the returns show 22, 65, 78, and 98 attendances, while no summons for irregular attendance had been taken out for four years."

The proviso, as will be seen, does not conflict with the educational character of the Bill. It does not attempt to lessen the age of exemption, but only applies where the age of exemption has been raised by local authorities to 13. It is, in fact, the adoption of a scheme which prevails in Germany and Switzerland under which children are allowed to work in summer and attend school in winter. This plan, known as summer work and winter schooling, has worked most admirably, and in certain districts in those countries the exemption age is as high as 14, 15, and even 16 years. Your Lordships will observe that the child will not lose any schooling. A child of 11 will work the winter in school. It will be exempted during the summer of that year, and on arriving at 12 would, were it not for this proviso, be able to leave school at once, but under this proviso, as the age of exemption is raised to 13, the child will get another winter's schooling. It will, therefore, be seen that the child gets two winters' schooling for one summer's work. I hope this proviso will be largely used in agricultural districts. By this system the parents will obtain the earnings of their children, who will be working legally in the fields for a period of the year, and they will be saved the annoyance of visits from the school attendance officer, and of summonses. The adoption of this system will also be of great advantage to the farmers, for they will be able to count upon children's labour just during the months when it is most wanted. The proviso has been very

carefully considered by the Education Department, and by the experienced officials of that Department, who see no reason why it should not be passed and work satisfactorily. I commend the Bill very heartily to your Lordships, who, I think, must concur in the opinion of the Education Department, and of those who have studied the question of education, that if Parliament raises the age standard it will procure for the children in our schools both increased physical and educational advantages. I now beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (the Duke of DEVONSHIRE): My Lords, I am very glad to see that this Bill is likely not to meet with any opposition in this House, and I think the House is very much indebted to the noble Lord for the speech in which he has moved its Second Reading. As he has said, the educational advantages of this measure are undoubted. All the educational authorities are united in desiring the change which the Bill will effect. The teachers are in favour of it, the managers of schools are almost unanimously in favour of it, and Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools have repeatedly urged the necessity of making this change. The only question which remained in doubt was whether the working classes generally were willing to make the sacrifice of the wages which their children might earn through the half-time system in order that they might have the benefit of a more complete period of schooling. But, as the noble Lord has told us, there is very little doubt remaining on that point, and I think it has been conclusively proved, by the very large majorities which this measure obtained in the other House, that the opinion of the working-classes generally is very different from what it was a short time ago. I have no doubt that the Members of the other House of Parliament are all most anxious that our education system should be made as complete as possible, but, however great may be the educational zeal of Members of Parliament, I doubt very much whether it would extend to the point of voting for a measure, not promoted by the Government, which was very strongly disapproved of by their constituents. The only opposition which

was offered to the Bill in the other House proceeded from a small section of Members representing manufacturing constituencies, and even they did not defend the half-time system, but only pointed out that it was a dying system, and that it would be better that it should be allowed to expire from natural causes rather than that it should be put an end to by legislative action. The position of the agricultural labourer is in so many parts of the country one of such great hardship and difficulty that the small wages which a child is able to earn by agricultural labour may make a very considerable difference in the income of the family, but I believe that the Amendment which was introduced in the House of Commons, and to which my noble friend has referred, has removed most of the objections which were felt by Members representing agricultural constituencies, and that the proposal which has been made will make it possible for a child to remain longer at school, but that during the last two years of his school life he will have holidays which will enable him to work during the summer, and attend school during the winter. That Amendment has removed every objection felt by the agricultural districts to this Bill. I am glad there is now a prospect that what almost amounted to a pledge on the part of the Government at the Conference of Berlin is likely to be redeemed, and I believe this Bill will make a very great improvement in our educational system.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: My Lords, I desire to avail myself of the opportunity of expressing my cordial support of this Bill. There is a certain satisfaction in thinking that at last, after, I believe, nine or ten years' delay, Parliament is now endeavouring partly to redeem the pledge given by a former Government at the International Conference. I think I am right in saying that we were in favour of the age of exemption being increased to thirteen, so that we have not achieved after all these years very great progress in this direction. Still, this Bill is an excellent step in advance, and I think it is very satisfactory to observe that, certainly in this House, it meets with, I think I may say, general approval and support. I quite understand the natural reluctance of the working classes to part with earnings

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which, no doubt, may in some cases be valuable to them, but I feel quite confident that, although the taking of this step may seem to some people rather difficult, in the long run when the Act has been at work it will be found that the hardship will be no longer felt. It is curious to observe how step by step we have advanced in the direction of securing the better education of our children, and I cannot help thinking that many things which a few years ago were regarded with great apprehension and suspicion are now accepted as matters of course. I shall not criticise the Amendment relating to children in agricultural districts, because I believe it is the result of careful consideration by Members of the other House well acquainted with the subject. It seems to them that the Amendment will give entire satisfaction, and I have no doubt it is well adapted to meet the case of children in agricultural districts. I see with the greatest satisfaction that the Bill is passing through this House, and I would venture here to congratulate Mr. Robson upon his success in thus far carrying this, one of the most useful and important measures that have been introduced for some time past.

THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: My Lords, I am glad to join in the general expressions of approval of this Bill, and I rejoice that, although it has been delayed, this step is now being taken. One of the circumstances which seriously impede the education of children all over the country is that at so early an age they leave school, and forget a great deal of what they have learnt. I very much hope that in the agricultural districts thirteen instead of twelve years of age will be fixed upon.

THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF YORK: My Lords, I desire also to express satisfaction that this Bill is likely to become law. I believe that it is accompanied by some positive advantages in the combination at an early period of practical work with education. The working of the measure will, I have no doubt, do something to check that migration of children from the country to the towns which is a very serious evil from many points of view. It not only diminishes the amount of labour at the disposal of the farmers, but in a large number of instances the children them-

selves incur serious moral dangers by going to the towns. By being retained at school till they are thirteen years of age they will be without this temptation, and also have their character strengthened. It is an unquestionable fact that a boy's character is formed between the age of twelve and sixteen, and by this Bill children will have the advantage of being under instruction up to a later age. I regard the Bill as a real moral gain for the children of the country.

On Question, agreed to.

Bill read 2^a (accordingly), and committed to a Committee of the whole House on Monday next.

ISOLATION HOSPITALS (AMENDMENT) BILL [Lords].

Amendments reported (according to Order), and Bill to be read 3^a on Monday next.

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (DEFECTIVE AND EPILEPTIC CHILDREN) BILL [Lords].

House in Committee (according to Order).

Clause 2.

LORD REAY: I desire to ask the noble Duke, the Lord President of the Council, a question with regard to boarding out, which is dealt with in *b* of Sub-section 1 of this clause. There is a considerable difference of opinion with regard to the advantages of boarding out, and it will have to be placed under very stringent regulations. I am aware, of course, that the Departmental Committee reported in favour of boarding out, but they suggested so many safeguards that the difficulty will be considerable. In Scotland the boarding out system, as applied to normal children, has been very successful, but it will be found that the number of homes to which defective and epileptic children can be safely sent is very small. I would remind the noble Duke of the evidence which was given before the Local Government Board Departmental Committee of 1896 on the education and maintenance of children by the person who is certainly most competent to express an opinion upon this subject. I refer to Miss Mason, the Local Government Board inspector of boarded-out children. She was asked by the Chairman of that Committee, Mr. Mundella:

"You say you think the feeble-minded child should not be boarded out?"

Miss Mason's answer was :

"No. I am sure of it."

I shall not propose an Amendment to this clause. All I ask is that the regulations which are to be made shall be of such a nature that there will be every guarantee that these children will be well looked after, and that the recommendation of the Departmental Committee, to the effect that the managers of the special classes are the proper persons to form or appoint the Boarding Out Committee, will be enforced. Sub-section 4 of this clause provides that a school authority may, in respect of children resident in their district and attending certified special classes or schools in the district of another school authority, contribute to that other authority the proportionate cost of the provision and maintenance of such special classes or schools. I do not think it is sufficient simply to limit this to residents. I think you should also enact that the school authority to whose district the children properly belong should be made liable for the expenditure. The cases are two-fold. One is the case of a child resident on the fringe of a district where these classes or schools are, but resident in a district where these classes and schools are not; and the other is the case of a child which is taken from its proper home and sent into a district where these classes are provided to reside with other people, thereby throwing the expenditure in respect of that child on the school authority, which is not the authority the Bill recognises to be the proper authority to bear that expenditure. I therefore wish to ask whether, at a future stage, there will be any objection to add words so that the clause would read, "in respect of children resident in, or who properly belong to their district," and whether a clause cannot be introduced after Clause 9 making it quite clear that if, on the one hand, it is simply permissive for a school authority or a board of guardians to make a payment, on the other hand you do not throw the burden of receiving these children on the school authority to which they do not belong. It seems to me obvious that a clause should be inserted protecting the ratepayers of the district which has erected these schools, as against the district which has not done so. The cost of education of a defective child in London is about £8 8s. per annum. The grant

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from the Government is about £1 7s., so that the burden thrown on the ratepayers comes to about £7 18s. Clearly, it would be very unfair, under these circumstances, that a defective child should become a burden on the ratepayers of a district to which it does not belong, simply because that district happens to meet a want which the other district to which the child belongs has not met.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: With regard to the first point raised by the noble Lord, I will make a note of the observations he has made and see what can be done to meet the difficulty. As to the second point, I am prepared to insert in Section 4 of Clause 2 the words, "or properly belonging to." The section will then read :

"A school authority may, in respect of children resident in, or properly belonging to their district, and attending certified special classes or schools in the district of another school authority, contribute to that other authority the proportionate cost of the provision and maintenance of such special classes or schools."

I am not quite certain that legal difficulties will not arise as to the interpretation of the words "or properly belonging to," but I am told that the draughtsmen have exercised their ingenuity and cannot find words to better carry out our intention. As to the other point of the noble Lord, I shall be prepared to move the insertion of a clause at the end of the Bill providing that nothing in the Act shall be construed as imposing a duty on a school authority to receive in a special class or school established by them any child who is resident in, or in their opinion properly belongs to, the district of another school authority; or is resident in a workhouse or in any institution to which it has been sent by the guardians from a workhouse or boarded out by the guardians, unless that other school authority, or, as the case may be, the guardians, are willing to contribute towards the expenses of the education and maintenance of the child such sum as may be agreed upon between the authorities concerned.

*THE MARQUESS OF BRISTOL: My Lords, the Bill provides that school authorities may make what arrangements they like for ascertaining whether there are defective children in their district, and, if there are, they may provide for their education in three ways; but there is no provision, so far as I can see, to compel the school authorities to assure

themselves, by means of expert medical advice and guidance, as to whether the children admitted into these institutions under the Bill are really of the class defined in the Bill. I do not think it is reasonable to leave the settlement of so grave a question as this to the School Board authorities themselves. Those who have had a lifelong experience in the care and maintenance of idiots and imbeciles find it a very difficult task to draw a dividing line between defective children and imbeciles. The effect of this Bill, unless it is provided that no child shall be boarded or lodged in an institution without a medical certificate stating that he or she, as the case may be, is not an idiot or an imbecile, will be to create institutions for the care, maintenance, and education of a higher grade of imbeciles called defective children, but not very dissimilar from those who are now being maintained and cared for in imbecile asylums, certified under the name of imbeciles. It must be remembered, moreover, that there will be no annual or periodical inspection by the Lunacy Commissioners, as in the case of asylums for idiots and imbeciles, of the children in the institutions proposed to be set up under this Bill, and this fact makes it all the more important that no child should be admitted into the institutions without a medical certificate to the effect that the child is neither an imbecile nor an idiot. I had thought of moving the rejection of that part of the interpretation clause which alludes to institutions, but it appeared to me that some store might be laid on the creation of these institutions by those who were promoting the Bill, which I gladly acknowledge is likely to prove a very useful and valuable one. Therefore I only propose to move a proviso to Sub-section 1 (c), which in my opinion, is absolutely essential, and imperatively necessary. I do not object to the provisions in the Bill for the boarding out of children in houses situated near the schools to be created under the Bill, and for boarding and lodging defective children in establishments, but what I do object to is the absence of any adequate security that only those children for whom the schools are provided shall be admitted. I also regret the absence of any provision enabling those children to be excluded who have been wrongfully admitted. I therefore hope the noble Duke in charge of the Bill will be able to

allow the proviso which I now beg to move to be inserted in the Bill.

Amendment moved—

"In Sub-section 1 (c), page 2, line 11, after 'children' to insert 'Provided that no child shall be boarded or lodged in an institution under this Act without a medical certificate stating that he or she, as the case may be, is not an idiot or imbecile. Such certificate shall be renewed yearly during the residence of the child in such institution.'—(*The Marquess of Bristol*.)

*EARL EGERTON: My Lords, I should like to point out that there is no provision in the Bill to carry out the recommendation of the Departmental Committee that school authorities should be required to appoint a medical officer to advise them in the discrimination of these children. The Amendment of the noble Marquess, however, bears upon this matter. The School Board for London have appointed a medical officer—Dr. Shuttleworth, I believe—to advise them, and I hope that, even if provision is not made in the Bill, the Education Department will see that the school authorities appoint medical officers to advise them, not only as to the selection of these children, and the discrimination between them and imbeciles, but also to inspect the homes to which children may be sent.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: I think the noble Earl who has just spoken has suggested the real answer to this Amendment. These are matters which, in our opinion, are better left to the Education Department than provided for in the Bill. We believe that the Amendment is quite unnecessary, because, under Section 1 (a) of Clause 1, which has already been passed, the object of the noble Marquess is sufficiently provided for. The arrangements under that section are to be made with the approval of the Education Department, and in accordance with the Report of the Departmental Committee. The Education Department would insist, in the first place, that no child should be admitted to any class or school or any institution who did not satisfy Section 1 (a) of Clause 1; secondly, that the name of the medical man certifying should be submitted to them so that they could assure themselves that he was a man conversant with such cases; and, thirdly, the Education Department reserve to themselves the final decision as to whether the case is suitable or not. These arrangements would, in our

opinion, meet the case far better than the Amendment, which only touches a small part of the subject. If these matters are to be regulated by Act of Parliament the Amendment ought to be very considerably extended. I hope, however, that what I have said as to the intention of the Education Department to act upon the recommendations of the Departmental Committee will satisfy the noble Lords who have spoken that the objects they have in view will really be attained.

Amendment (by leave of the Committee) withdrawn.

Amendment moved—

"In page 2, line 22, alter the words 'resident in' to insert 'or property belonging to.'"
—(*The Lord President of the Council.*)

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I should be glad if some noble and learned Lord would inform the House what "properly belonging to" means. I am not aware of any definition which determines who belongs to a district or a parish except the definition in the Poor Law. It is there provided that every person who is born in a particular place belongs by settlement to that particular place, subject, however, to this very large alteration—namely, that anyone who has resided for one continuous year in any place cannot be considered as belonging to the place of his original settlement, although he will revert to it if he leaves the place in which he has resided for a year. It seems to me that unless a precise definition is provided in this Bill you will get into all kinds of difficulties, and have very interesting law suits between the various parishes as to which parish should maintain these children. There is nothing which delights some people more than litigation of this sort, which is most unprofitable and unsatisfactory, and the cost of which falls on the ratepayers of both parishes. I hope the Bill will go to a Standing Committee, where it may be possible to insert some precise definition.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: I stated, in the few remarks I made in reply to the noble Lord opposite (Lord Reay), that I was not absolutely satisfied that the words might not give rise to some difficulty. The case we have in view is that in which children are sent from their homes to reside with a relative in a parish

The Duke of Devonshire.

where a suitable school or class is provided. It is only reasonable and just that if a child is sent for that purpose into a parish to which it does not belong, the parish to which it properly belongs should pay for it.

On Question, "That these words be here inserted," agreed to.

Clause 2, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 3 to 9, amended, and agreed to.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: I now beg to move, in order to meet the difficulty suggested by the noble Lord opposite (Lord Reay), the insertion of a new clause after Clause 9.

Amendment moved—

"At end of Clause 9 to insert, as a new clause: 'Nothing in this Act shall be construed as imposing a duty on a school authority to receive in a special class or school established by them any child who (a) is resident in, or in their opinion properly belongs to, the district of another school authority; or (b) is resident in a workhouse or in any institution to which it has been sent by the guardians from a workhouse, or boarded out by the guardians, unless that other school authority, or, as the case may be, the guardians, are willing to contribute towards the expenses of the education and maintenance of the child such sum as may be agreed upon between the authorities concerned.'"
—(*The Lord President of the Council.*)

On Question, "That this clause be here inserted," agreed to.

Remaining clauses agreed to, with Amendments; Bill re-committed to the Standing Committee; and to be printed as amended. (No. 150.)

COMMONS AND OPEN SPACES BILL [Lords].

House to be in Committee on Tuesday next.

QUESTIONS.

RE-HOUSING OF DISPLACED PERSONS.

*THE EARL OF HARDWICKE: My Lords, I have arranged with the noble Duke, the Lord President of the Council, to postpone the question standing on the

Paper in my name, in which I had given notice to ask Her Majesty's Government whether their attention has been called to the action of the London School Board in respect of the site for a proposed school in Bethnal Green, known as the Wood Street site, whereby, although more than twenty houses, occupied by persons belonging to the labouring classes, are taken, the Standing Orders of the House of Lords as to the re-housing of persons displaced are evaded; and, if so, would Her Majesty's Government, in view of the growing seriousness of the overcrowding problem in East London, take steps to prevent such evasion in the future.

PROTECTION OF PLOVERS' EGGS.

*THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND: My Lords, I beg to ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Home Secretary has power to prohibit the taking of plovers' eggs in any county after a certain date without extending the prohibition to the whole year. As your Lordships are aware, the Home Secretary has power to forbid the taking of eggs of certain birds during the whole of the year. Certain county councils have applied to the Home Secretary to prohibit the taking of plovers' eggs during the whole of the year, and the Home Secretary has in some cases very naturally declined to sanction such a prohibition. In the first place, a good many of us are very fond of eating plovers' eggs; and, secondly, they are more or less a subject of trade, and it would be a serious matter to preclude the taking of these eggs during the whole of the year. But I have been told that shepherds bring plovers' eggs into country towns well into June, when not more than one out of six is really fit for food. The question is whether the Home Secretary has power to prohibit taking the eggs for a part of the year only. There is considerable doubt on that point in the minds of county councils, and I have been asked by the County Councils Association to put the question of which I have given notice.

LORD BELPER: My Lords, in answer to the noble Duke, I have to say that there has been no special application to the Secretary of State for the Home Department from any local authority for an Order such as he describes; that is to

say, there has been no application to the Home Secretary to prohibit the taking of plovers' eggs for a certain portion of the year without prohibiting for the whole year. The subject has been under the consideration of the Home Secretary, and, as a doubt has been raised whether Section 2 of the Act of 1894, which deals with this question, gives power to make an Order such as that indicated, he is taking the opinion of the Law Officers of the Crown on the point. Of course, if it is found that the Home Secretary has the power, it will be within his discretion to exercise it whenever application is made to him.

House adjourned at a quarter before
Six of the clock, to Monday next,
a quarter before Eleven of the clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 30th June, 1899.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [Lords].

Standing Orders not previously inquired into complied with.

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills that in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:

GREAT EASTERN RAILWAY (GENERAL POWERS) BILL [Lords].

NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE RAILWAY BILL [Lords].

Ordered, that the Bills be read a second time.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS [Lords].

Standing Orders applicable thereto complied with.

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills that

in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz. :

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 11) BILL [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time upon Monday next.

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY BILL.

Lords Amendments considered and agreed to.

ST. JAMES'S AND PALL MALL ELECTRIC LIGHT BILL.

Lords Amendments to be considered upon Tuesday next.

INVERNESS HARBOUR BILL [Lords].

Queen's Consent signified. Read the third time and passed, with Amendments.

COBHAM GAS BILL [Lords].

STRETTFORD GAS BILL [Lords].

As amended, considered ; to be read the third time.

MILLWALL DOCK BILL.

Ordered, That Standing Orders 84, 214, 215, and 239 be suspended, and that the Bill be now taken into consideration provided amended prints shall have been previously deposited.—(*Dr. Farquharson.*)

Bill, as amended, considered accordingly.

Ordered, That Standing Orders 223 and 243 be suspended, and that the Bill be now read the third time.—(*Dr. Farquharson.*)

Bill read the third time accordingly, and passed.

WEST METROPOLITAN RAILWAY BILL.

Ordered, That Standing Orders 84, 214, 215, and 239 be suspended, and that the Bill be now taken into consideration provided amended prints shall have been previously deposited.—(*Dr. Farquharson.*)

Bill, as amended, considered accordingly.

Ordered, That Standing Orders 223 and 243 be suspended, and that the Bill be now read the third time.—(*Dr. Farquharson.*)

Bill read the third time accordingly, and passed.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 10) BILL [Lords].

Read a second time, and committed.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES) BILL.

Ordered, That the Order of 6th June referring the Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Order (Housing of Working Classes) Bill to a Committee be read, and discharged.

Ordered, that the Bill be withdrawn.—(*Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland.*)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 10) BILL.

Reported with an Amended Title [Provisional Order relating to Bradford (Yorks.) not confirmed ; remaining Orders confirmed] ; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill, as amended, to be considered upon Monday next.

BRIGHTON MARINE PALACE AND PIER BILL [Lords].

Reported, with Amendments ; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

LOWESTOFT WATER AND GAS BILL [Lords].

Reported, with Amendments ; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

GREAT GRIMSBY STREET TRAMWAYS BILL [Lords].

Reported, with Amendments ; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

ALL SAINTS' CHURCH (CARDIFF) BILL [Lords].

Reported, with Amendments ; Report to lie upon the Table.

YORKE ESTATE BILL [Lords].

Reported, without Amendment ; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Bill to be read the third time.

KIRKCALDY CORPORATION AND TRAMWAYS BILL [Lords].

PAISLEY AND BARRHEAD DISTRICT RAILWAY BILL [Lords].

Reported, with Amendments ; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

BIRMINGHAM, NORTH WARWICKSHIRE, AND STRATFORD-UPON-AVON RAILWAY BILL [Lords].

Report [29th June] from the Select Committee on Standing Orders read.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.—(*Dr. Farquharson.*)

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 5) BILL.

Lords Amendments to be considered upon Monday next.

PETITIONS.

POOR LAW AMENDMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1845.

Petition from Alness, for alteration of law; to lie upon the Table.

PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Kinghorn, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ROYAL NIGER COMPANY.

Copy presented,—Of Letter from the Foreign Office to the Treasury, dated 15th June, 1899, with respect to the revocation of the Charter of the Royal Niger Company, and to the taking over by Her Majesty's Government of the administrative rights and powers of the Company; together with copies of the Treasury Minute on the subject, dated 30th June, 1899, and relative Schedules [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

WOODS, FORESTS, AND LAND REVENUES.

Copy presented,—Of Seventy-seventh Report of the Commissioners; dated 29th June, 1899 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 257.]

FINANCE ACCOUNTS.

Copy presented,—Of Finance Accounts of the United Kingdom for the year ended 31st March, 1899 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 258.]

CIVIL LIST PENSIONS.

Copy presented,—of List of all Pensions granted during the year ended 20th June, 1899, and charged upon the Civil List [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 259.]

FACTORY AND WORKSHOP ACTS (EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN OVER-TIME IN WASHING BOTTLES, &c.)

Copy presented,—of Order of Secretary of State for the Home Department extending to Factories and Workshops in which the Washing of Bottles for use in the preserving of fruit is carried on, the Special Exception (Employment of Women Overtime) [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

ARMY COMMISSIONS.

Address for "Return of the number of Commissions granted during each of the years 1885 to 1898, inclusive, specifying the numbers granted from the ranks (*a*) as Second Lieutenants; (*b*) as Quarter-masters and Riding Masters; and also the number granted from other sources in (1) Engineers and Artillery; (2) Cavalry; (3) Infantry; showing percentage of those given under (*a*) to those granted from other sources."—(*Mr. Pirie.*)

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to: Fine or Imprisonment (Scotland and Ireland) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 18) Bill; Electric Lighting Provisional Orders (No. 19) Bill; Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 1) Bill, without Amendment.

That they have agreed to: Kensington and Notting Hill Electric Lighting Bill; Barry Railway Bill; Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (New Railways) Bill; Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway (Various Powers) Bill, with Amendments.

Amendments to—

BARTON-ON-SEA WATER BILL [Lords].

LANARKSHIRE (MIDDLE WARD DISTRICT) WATER BILL [Lords].

Without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled "An Act to Amend Section 20 of The

Parish of Manchester Division Act, 1850" [Manchester Canonries Bill [Lords].

And also a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confirm an Agreement between the Fylde Waterworks Company and the Fylde Water Board for the Sale and Purchase of the Company's undertaking, to Consolidate and Amend the Acts relating to the Company; and for other purposes." [Fylde Water Board Bill [Lords].

FYLDE WATER BOARD BILL [Lords].

Read 1^a, and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

QUESTIONS.

WAR OFFICE ESTABLISHMENT.

MR. MOON (St. Pancras, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the fact that the present occupant will, on the 22nd of December next, have acted in the capacity of Staff Paymaster in the Quartermaster General's branch of the War Office for six years and four months (such appointments being usually for five years only), he will take steps to ensure the appointment as from the 22nd of December next of an officer with recent experience of the Pay Department work outside the War Office.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): The Secretary of State will await the recommendations of the Quartermaster-General.

FORT GEORGE WATER SUPPLY.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War what progress is being made with the scheme for providing Fort George with an adequate supply of water.

MR. WYNDHAM: Orders have been issued to the contractor to lay down the mains.

MR. WEIR: When will this satisfactory supply of water be provided for these barracks?

MR. WYNDHAM: Within a reasonable period.

UNDER-AGE RECRUITS.

MR. PIRIE (Aberdeen, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for

War if he can explain how it was that Private Joseph M'Combie, Gordon Highlanders, was accepted as a recruit in 1897, although born in 1882, and therefore only 15 years old at time of enlistment; whether, seeing that the Government refuse to require the production of a certificate of birth on enlistment for the Army, as is done in the Navy, steps can be taken to check the increasing practice of enlisting boys below the nominal regulation age by holding the recruiting and medical authorities responsible when errors as to age of recruits are proved; whether the recruiting and medical authorities are prompted to treat the age regulations as non-essential by being given to understand that subjects for enlistment must be provided regardless of qualifications; and whether in the above case those responsible for the enlistment of Private Joseph M'Combie will be reprimanded for their disregard of regulation as to age.

MR. WYNDHAM: I have not been able as yet to obtain full information in regard to the particular case in question. It is difficult to form an exact judgment of age from a medical examination; but for errors such as can be avoided the medical officers are held responsible. They are not prompted to treat the age regulations as non-essential, and no such understanding exists.

THE MILITARY WORKS LOAN ACT, 1897.

MR. PIRIE: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War, would he state the total sum to be obtained under the Military Works Loan Act, 1897, and the continuation of it for which a resolution was passed last week; of that total, what is the amount to be expended on the United Kingdom, and what sums are to be spent in England, Scotland, and Ireland, respectively; what decision has been come to as regards the Piershill Barracks, Edinburgh; and where are the proposed convalescent homes for the Army to be situated.

MR. WYNDHAM: In reply to Paragraphs 1 and 2 the figures are as follow: Loan 1897, £5,458,000; loan 1899, £4,000,000; total, £9,458,000. The amounts apportioned to barracks, rifle ranges, and married quarters at home are as follow: England, £4,124,500; Scotland, £65,000; Ireland, £741,400; total, United Kingdom, £4,930,900. No provi.

sion has been made in the Bill which has been read a first time for Piershill Barracks, but they are included in the complete War Office scheme. I shall be happy to supply the hon. and gallant Member with a list of the stations to which it is proposed to send convalescent soldiers.

ENFIELD SMALL ARMS FACTORY CHAPEL.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether £292 is now being paid from the Army Votes for the maintenance of the chapel at the Small Arms Factory at Enfield; whether he is aware that the services in the chapel, as conducted by Mr. Carter, include several matters and ceremonies which have been condemned as illegal by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, and under other judgments of ecclesiastical courts; whether Her Majesty's Government, in providing out of public money for a church service for the workmen, guarantee to those workmen that they shall have the service of the Church of England, as determined by the Prayer Book and the courts; and whether the Secretary of State will either take steps to ensure that the service at this chapel shall be conducted according to law, or discontinue this chapel altogether, in view of the local facilities for attendance at religious services at other churches and places of worship.

MR. WYNDHAM: The annual amount paid from Army votes for the chapel at the Small Arms Factory is about £197. As I stated in reply to a question on the 12th of this month, the chapel was built at Enfield because there were no other churches within a reasonable distance; and the responsibility for the service rests with the vicar of the parish, who provides a curate. No complaint has been received as to the character of the services, and the Secretary of State does not propose to interfere.

MR. CHANNING: Will the hon. Gentleman answer the third paragraph of the question?

MR. WYNDHAM: I do not know whether the hon. Gentleman quite sees the distinction between the Enfield and other chapels. At Enfield we merely contribute as any other employer of labour might.

MR. WEIR: Will the hon. Gentleman consider the desirability of abolishing payment for ritualistic services?

(No answer was given.)

INDIAN GUARANTEED AND SUBSIDISED RAILWAYS.

MR. J. H. ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he will state what amount was, during the second portion of the year 1898, provided out of current Indian revenues to make up the difference between the net earnings of the guaranteed and subsidised Indian railways for that period, and the amount required for interest and dividends under contract; and whether he will present a statement showing the sums paid during the period referred to out of State revenues to the several railway companies, together with any sums which may have accrued to the public revenues from railways the net earnings of which exceeded the guaranteed interest during the same period.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The Government accounts are not prepared according to the calendar year. I have no objection to have a statement prepared from the accounts of the several Indian Railway Companies, to show, with as much accuracy as practicable, the position of the Government in respect of the guaranteed and subsidised companies in the two half-years of 1898. To take the second half-year alone would be misleading.

MR. J. H. ROBERTS: I beg to ask the Secretary for India whether he will state what has been the falling off in the gross earnings of the Indian Railways since 1st April, the beginning of the present financial year; and whether such reductions will affect the General Budget Estimate of 1899-1900, to be considered by the House at a later stage of the session.

LORD G. HAMILTON: The gross earnings of the Indian Railways from the 1st of April to the 20th of May, 1899, were Rx.4,094,030, or less by Rx.441,192 than the earnings in the corresponding period of 1898, which were unusually large. The prospect of the Railway Revenue Account will, of course, form one point for consideration in the discussion that will take place on the Financial Statement for the current year.

CRIMINAL JURISDICTION IN INDIA.

MR. J. H. ROBERTS: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the notification recently issued from the Political Department of the Government of India purporting to extend jurisdiction, under the Indian Penal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code, to a tract of country bordered on the east by the Deva Ismail Khan district, and on the west by the Bargha Shiranis country; whether this region is beyond the frontiers of Her Majesty's Indian possessions; and, if so, whether he will state under whose authority, and by what statutory sanction, does the jurisdiction of the Indian Government purport to be established on such foreign territory; and whether he will state whether any civil or military officers of the Indian Government are stationed in that tract; and, if so, when and how will the consent of Parliament be asked, as required by the Act of 1858, to sanction the consequent expenditure of Indian revenues beyond the frontiers?

LORD G. HAMILTON: (1) I am aware that a notification under the Indian Foreign Jurisdiction Act has been issued in respect of the Bargha Shiranis country; (2) the country lies outside the administrative borders of the Punjab, but inside the frontier of Her Majesty's Indian possessions. As Her Majesty has foreign jurisdiction in the tract, action has been legally taken under the Indian Foreign Jurisdiction Act; (3) a native extra Assistant Commissioner is stationed in the tract, and no action under the Act of 1858 is required.

INDIAN MEDICAL REGULATIONS.

MR. STUART (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if he will lay upon the Table a Copy of the Circular issued from Simla, on the 18th of June, 1898, for the purpose of ascertaining from the various medical schools whether female hospital assistants could be obtained to engage in the examination of prostitutes in India; and if he will state the result of the inquiry how many of such hospital assistants have consented to perform these examinations, and on what terms they have been engaged.

LORD G. HAMILTON: I have seen no copy of the circular in question, but I will make inquiries on the subject.

THE EGYPTIAN EXILES.

MR. DAVITT (Mayo, S.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has been informed that the Egyptian political exiles in Ceylon are complaining of enfeebled health, and pray to be allowed to return in their old age to their native country; that Arabi Pasha cannot walk without support; that Yakoob Sami Pasha is suffering from heart disease, and is unable to take exercise; that Mahmood Sami Pasha is fast losing his eyesight; and that Ali Fehmi Pasha has to subsist entirely on milk diet owing to general debility; and whether, in view of the injurious effects produced on their health by their long banishment, and in consideration of their age and the present condition of Egypt, Her Majesty's Government will follow the course pursued in the case of Toulba Pasha in the cases of these four remaining political exiles.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (MR. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): The accounts received from Ceylon do not altogether bear out the statements made in the first paragraph. The reports on the health of the exiles have been forwarded to Her Majesty's Agent and Consul-General in Egypt. But so long as the Egyptian Government have reason to believe that the return of the remaining exiles will be dangerous to public order, Her Majesty's Government cannot press for the concession.

BRITISH-OWNED PROPERTY AT HANKOW.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD (York): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is aware that on 2nd January, 1899, the premises of Messrs. Evans, Pugh, and Company (a British firm at Hankow) were forcibly entered by Cossacks, who prevented hides being carried in and threw their goods on the premises outside; whether the premises referred to were included in the Russian concession; whether the Foreign Office made two distinct declarations that British-owned property cannot be included in Russian concession without consent of owner; whether the owner of the afore-mentioned premises protested on sixteen occasions against the inclusion of his property in the Russian concession; and whether he

can inform the House as to the present position of Messrs. Evans and Pugh, Messrs. Jardine and Matheson, Messrs. Sassoon, and other British owners in Hankow whose land was appropriated or sold by auction by the Russian Consul.

MR. BRODRICK: On the 2nd January Her Majesty's Minister at Pekin received a telegram from the British Consul at Hankow stating that the Cosack police had prevented the hides being conveyed to Mr. Whistler's premises in the Russian concession. Sir C. MacDonald at once communicated with his Russian colleague, who telegraphed to Hankow ordering all such action to be stopped. At the instance of Her Majesty's Consul at Hankow the Russian authorities had repeatedly granted extensions of the term allowed to Messrs. Evans, Pugh and Company to find another site for their business, tanneries not being permitted near dwelling-houses by municipal regulations. Her Majesty's Government hold that no British-owned property can be included in a foreign concession without the owner's consent, and a large addition to the British concession at Hankow was demanded from and granted by the Chinese authorities as compensation in consequence of this having been done at Hankow. Messrs. Evans, Pugh's case has been settled by their acceptance of an offer made to them by the Chinese authorities, which will enable them to carry on their business in the British extension without loss. The case of Messrs. Jardine, Matheson's lots is at present under discussion with the Russian Government. It is a question of title. As regards Messrs. Sassoon's case, Her Majesty's Minister reported on February 14th that matters were awaiting the return from England of their agent, and we have no more recent information.

FRENCH SETTLEMENT AT SHANGHAI.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he can explain the present position of the settlement diptute at Shanghai, and whether the French Government have yet abandoned their claims to exclusive rights, control, and jurisdiction over a portion of this important port in the Yang-tsze Valley; whether Her Majesty's Government have ever admitted the French claim that their portion

of the settlement at Shanghai is to be treated as the soil of France, while they claim and exercise equal rights of control with the British Consul in the British portion of the settlement; and whether the French have any justification for their claim that the Province of Szechuan is in the French sphere of influence.

MR. BRODRICK: As the result of protracted negotiations the extension of the International Settlement at Shanghai, in which all Powers, France included, possess equal rights, has recently been granted. The French Government are urging upon the Chinese authorities a modification of the character of the exclusive French Settlement, which has existed there for some time; but we are imperfectly informed as to the details. Szechuan is one of the two provinces in which it was agreed by the Declaration of January, 1896, that all privileges and advantages secured by either England or France should be rendered common to both Powers.

THE SINKING OF THE "KOW SHING."

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs the present position of the claim of a British firm against the Chinese Government for the sinking of the "Kow Shing," the date of the last communication of Her Majesty's Government on the subject addressed to the Tsung-li-Yamèn, and the date of their reply; and whether any limit has been fixed to the reasonable time to be given to the Chinese Government indicated by the Under Secretary for War two months ago.

MR. BRODRICK: We are still awaiting a reply from the Chinese Government to the proposal that the question should be referred to arbitration, and a note was sent to the Chinese Minister on the 9th ultimo, pressing for a reply. The answer to the second question is in the negative.

HERRING TRADE WITH ST. PETERSBURG.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, having regard to the fact that in April last Her Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg was instructed to make renewed representations, with the view to obtain further improvements in the facilities for the discharge and storage of

herrings at St. Petersburg, will the Government now state the result of those representations.

MR. BRODRICK: The answer of the Russian Government to the representations made by Her Majesty's Ambassador in April last has not yet been received.

BARRACLOUGH v. THE BISHOP OF ST. HELENA.

SIR CAMERON GULL (Devonshire, Barnstaple): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether it is the fact that the Governor of St. Helena, who acts as Chief Justice of the island, has tried the same action of Barraclough v. the Bishop of St. Helena on four different occasions, with the following results: the first trial, verdict for the defendant; the second (granted by the Governor on the ground that he misdirected the jury in the first case) for the defendant; the third against the executors of the Bishop, who had died in the meantime (again granted on the ground of misdirection in the second trial), the jury could not agree and were dismissed; the fourth for the defendants; that the Governor then refused to accept the verdict, deprived the jury of their fees, and finally decided the case himself for the plaintiff; whether, under the laws of St. Helena, there is any limit to the number of times the same action, raising the same issues, may be tried by the same judge; and whether a strong representation, signed by three out of four members of the Council of St. Helena, has been sent to the Secretary of State on the subject of the Governor's administration of justice; and, if so, whether any steps have been or will be taken to inquire into the statements of the members of the Council.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): (1) I have received from unofficial sources information substantially to the effect of the statements in the hon. Baronet's first question, and I have called upon the Governor for a full report and explanations. (2) The law of St. Helena on the subject of civil actions is substantially the same as the law of England. (3) I have received such a representation; most of the statements contained in it were sufficiently answered by the Governor. When I receive his Report on the matter referred to in the

first question, I shall consider what further action, if any, is required.

LOCAL WATER SUPPLIES.

MR. THOMAS BAYLEY (Derbyshire, Chesterfield): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he yet sees a reasonable prospect of making progress with a Bill for the greater protection of water supplies, so as to give more extensive powers to local authorities to deal with the water supply of the districts under their control. And, whether he can see his way to bring in a Government Bill making the county councils (with the exception of the London County Council, which already has such powers) the water authority of their respective districts.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. CHAPLIN, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): As regards the second paragraph of the question, I could not give an undertaking to suggest the county councils as the authority for the purpose in question, and in reply to the first part of the question I cannot say, having regard to the present state of public business, that the prospect of being able to make progress with the Bill referred to is very promising.

SMALL-POX AT HULL.

MR. R. G. WEBSTER (St. Pancras, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is in a position to state the number of patients during the present epidemic of small-pox at Hull who were vaccinated, and the number of those who were unvaccinated, and also the percentage of deaths of those who were vaccinated and unvaccinated respectively.

MR. CHAPLIN: Of the 83 cases of small-pox at Hull, as to which the Local Government Board have information, 62 showed evidence on examination of having been vaccinated, and 21 appeared to have been unvaccinated. The rate of death amongst patients exhibiting evidence of vaccination has been 9.7 per cent., whilst amongst those exhibiting no evidence of vaccination it has been 57.1 per cent.

THE ROYAL NIGER COMPANY.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he proposes to circulate before Monday any

Papers in reference to the transfer of the Royal Niger Company.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS-BEACH, Bristol, W.): I hope to lay Papers on the Table on Monday.

TITHE RENT-CHARGE.

MR. MCKENNA (Monmouth, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he can state the number of cases in which the amount of tithe rent-charge not severed from a benefice exceeds £1,000, exceeds £500 and does not exceed £1,000, and exceeds £100 and does not exceed £500 respectively, and the total amount of the tithe rent-charge in each of the categories named.

***THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE** (Mr. LONG, Liverpool, W. Derby): I regret that it is not possible for me to give the information desired by the hon. Member in the precise form in which he asks for it, but I may state as the result of inquiries which I recently made that in 255 cases the rateable value of the tithe rent-charge attached to a benefice was found to exceed £500, in 273 cases it exceeded £400, and did not exceed £500, whilst in 7,263 cases it did not exceed £160, and in 2,700 cases, although it exceeded £160, it did not exceed £400. There were therefore, 10,236 cases below £500, and 255 cases above it.

INVER WATER SUPPLY.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he will state the result of the communications which have passed between the Local Government Board and the local authority of the Easter Ross district in regard to the unsatisfactory water supply of Inver village, in the Parish of Tain, Ross-shire.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): I am informed by the Local Government Board that since the hon. Member asked a question on this subject they have been in communication with the local authority of the Easter Ross district of the county. The locality is an exceedingly poor one, and consequently the formation of a special water supply district is quite impracticable; but, on the advice of the Board, measures are being taken to safeguard the existing

wells from surface contamination and other sources of pollution. A new source well, removed from any such risks, has been opened, and pending more elaborate arrangements the opening of further new wells is contemplated under the directions of the sanitary inspector.

ABERDEEN CEMETERY SCANDAL.

GENERAL RUSSELL (Cheltenham): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether he can state the result of the investigations which were being conducted into the alleged desecration of graves in Aberdeen; and whether all those who are accused of being implicated in these desecrations are to be prosecuted.

MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: The investigation is still proceeding. I am not yet in a position to add anything to the answer I gave my hon. and gallant friend on the 19th instant.

CREWS OF SCOTTISH FISHERY CRUISERS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he will state the number of days' leave of absence granted to the crew of each of the Scottish Fishery Board cruisers during the year 1898.

MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I am informed that the granting of leave to the crews of the Fishery Board cruisers is left to the discretion of the commanders and that the Scottish Office receives no reports on the subject.

MR. WEIR: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that he gave a like answer to a similar question some time ago? I want to know the number of days these men are allowed for a holiday.

MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I do not know. It is a matter in the discretion of the commanding officer.

MR. WEIR: I hope the right hon. Gentleman will find out and furnish me with the information.

RE-HOUSING OF DISPLACED PERSONS.

MR. TALBOT (Oxford University): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to a statement of Mr. Harold Hodge, Chairman of the Bethnal Green Branch of the Mansion House Council for the Housing of the Poor, that the London School Board have recently acquired a

site in Bethnal Green, known as the Wood Street site, including twenty houses belonging to the labouring classes; that the site was divided into two portions, one containing thirteen houses dealt with in an Act of 1895, the other containing seven houses dealt with in the Act of 1896; and whether any provision has been made for the rehousing of the persons so displaced; and, if not, whether he will take measures to prevent what appears to be an evasion of the law.

SIR MANCHERJEE BHOWNAG-GREE (Bethnal Green, N.E.): I beg at the same time to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that the Wood Street site in Bethnal Green, acquired by the London School Board in two separate portions in 1895 and 1896, has been so acquired for what is essentially one scheme; that the site comprised twenty-one houses in the occupation of persons belonging to the labouring classes, but that no provision has been made for rehousing of persons displaced by such acquisition; and what steps he intends taking to remedy the inconvenience caused thereby in such a thickly populated district as Bethnal Green.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg also to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether it has been brought to his knowledge that in the same locality, under the Act of 1896, the London School Board took nineteen houses in one street without making provision for the rehousing of the displaced occupiers, and will he take steps to prevent the systematic evasion of the law.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir M. WHITE-RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): If my hon. friend the Member for North East Bethnal Green will permit me, I will answer his question also at the same time as that of my right hon. friend the Member for Oxford University. I am informed by the London School Board that the facts are substantially as stated in the Questions, and that no provision for rehousing the displaced persons has been made, as no liability to rehouse arose under the Statutes. I propose to communicate further with the Board upon the subject, and, if necessary, with the Education Department.

MR. PICKERSGILL: If I give the right hon. Gentleman particulars of the case I have mentioned will he make similar inquiries?

*SIR M. WHITE-RIDLEY: I understood the hon. Gentleman to be referring to the same case.

MR. PICKERSGILL: No, not the same case, but a precisely similar one in the same locality.

*SIR M. WHITE-RIDLEY: I shall be prepared to look into any case.

FATAL ACCIDENTS.

SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can state the number of fatal accidents, under the heads quarries, factories, and miscellaneous, since the 1st July, 1898, as compared with an equal period prior to the 1st July, 1898; whether it is computed that in railways and mines the fatal accidents bear a larger proportion to the number of hands employed than they did previously; and what reason is given by his advisers for any apparent proportional increase in the case of quarries, factories, and docks.

*SIR M. WHITE-RIDLEY: The numbers of fatal accidents during the eleven months from July, 1898, to May, 1899, were—in factories, 610; in quarries, 129; under the Notice of Accidents Act, 51. The corresponding numbers for the eleven months prior to July, 1898, were 459, 95, and 58. As regards railways and mines, there are no returns showing the number of hands employed during the present year; but taking the figures for the previous four years I find that there has been a satisfactory decrease in the proportion of fatal accidents to persons employed. In the case of factories, docks, and quarries the increase of fatal accidents is, I am advised, to be attributed almost entirely to the improvement of trade. If the hon. Member will refer to the statistics of fatal accidents in factories given in Table 98 of the Abstract of Labour statistics, 1897-8, he will find that the number of accidents in factories regularly rises and falls according to the state of trade. The greater part of the increase during the past year has occurred in the metal industries, in shipbuilding and in docks—industries specially affected by the improvement of trade.

SEATS IN KEW GARDENS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works if he will consider the propriety of increasing the number of seats in Kew Gardens, where the accommodation is inadequate for the public frequenting the gardens.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (MR. AKERS-DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustines): I find that there is seating accommodation in Kew Gardens for at least 2,000 persons. I have no funds at my disposal this year for supplying more; but, supposing more to be necessary, I will consider in the preparation of next year's Estimates whether some additional seats can be provided for.

COLLECTORS OF CUSTOMS.

SIR CHARLES CAMERON (Glasgow, Bridgeton): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury what has been the average number of junior collectors of Customs between the 24th of March, 1891, and the 24th of June, 1899, whose salaries have ranged from £250 to £500, and what has been the average number of surveyors of Customs for the same period; how many such junior collectors have been promoted to superior collectorships with salaries ranging from £340 upwards during that period; and how many surveyors have been so promoted, and have such promotions on the part of surveyors caused a flow of promotion from the examining officer grade to that of surveyor.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. HANBURY, Preston): (1) The average annual number of junior collectors provided for on the Customs Establishment between the 24th of March, 1891, and the 24th of June, 1899, whose salaries ranged from £250 to £500 inclusive has been 43. (2) The average annual number of Surveyors of all classes for the same period has been 99. (3) The number of junior collectors promoted from class to class to salaries in excess of £340 during the same period has been 62, such promotions having been the result of 18 vacancies in the higher ranks. (4) One surveyor has been promoted to a newly created collectorship within the above mentioned period, but no flow of promotion followed in this instance from grade of examining officer, as the office of surveyor was abolished. Two examining officers have, however, been

appointed collectors, viz., one in 1897 and one in 1898.

TELEGRAPHIC CHARGES.

MR. R. G. WEBSTER: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster-General, if his attention has been called to the present high charges and inequalities in the scale of charges for sending telegrams from the United Kingdom to many British possessions and foreign countries; and, if the Government propose to take any steps to remedy this state of affairs by suggesting an international conference in regard to them or otherwise.

MR. HANBURY: The Postmaster-General has not received any general representation on the subject, but we understand that communications have been recently addressed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. With the consent of the companies considerable reductions were made at the last International Telegraph Conference at Budapest; and at the next International Conference, to be held in 1901, there will be an opportunity for again bringing the charges under review.

PROMOTION OF IRISH SCHOOL TEACHERS.

MR. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Commissioners of National Education have made a certain rule whereby teachers who obtained the grade of first of second class under the old programme are deprived of promotion to first class for highly efficient service, while those who obtain first of second class under the new programme can be promoted to first class for the same efficient service; whether he is aware that the first of second class teachers on the old programme are aggrieved with this treatment, which they regard as a great injustice, as most of them were trained under the same conditions as the new programme teachers, receive the same salary, and have been promoted to their present class on account of efficient service given in their schools; will he use his influence with the National Education Commissioners to have this state of affairs remedied and these teachers placed, in regard to promotion, under the same conditions; is the course generally followed in the various branches of the

public service, when changes are made, to give to all holding the same rank the same privileges for promotion; and was this the course hitherto followed by the Commissioners of National Education.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. G. W. BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): I am informed by the Commissioners that the teachers who obtained the grade of first division of second class under the old system do not stand on the same level as those who obtained this class under the new programme, the latter being obliged to pass an examination for that purpose, which closely approximates to the test formerly applied for first class. It is in virtue of this higher literary status of the new first division of second class that further examination is dispensed with in their case, and it is open to those holding the same grade under the old system to obtain a like privilege on passing the same examination with the required answering. Representations have been made on behalf of teachers holding the grade of first division of second class under the old system on the subject of their supposed claim to similar treatment as regards promotion with those of the new first and second grade, but for the reason stated the Commissioners do not consider there is sufficient ground for such a claim. With respect to the third, fourth, and fifth paragraphs, the course at all times followed by the Commissioners in the matter of the promotion of their teachers was that which was in accordance with the provisions of their rules for the time being, and rank has always been regarded as but one of the elements governing promotion in the Commissioners' service.

MEDICINES, &c., FOR IRISH WORKHOUSE HOSPITALS.

MR. MACALEESE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether any complaint has been made of the imperfect list of medicines and appliances issued by the Treasury for the Irish workhouse hospitals; whether the Treasury make an allowance of one-half the cost on the medicines and appliances contained in their own lists only, leaving the unions to pay the full amount on all articles procured outside said lists; and whether, in consequence of the deficient stocks of appliances allowed by the Treasury, many cases have occurred where poor persons

have for weeks been kept waiting for treatment; if so, will this matter be inquired into with a view to effective reform.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: The answer to the first paragraph is in the negative. The list of medicines and medical and surgical appliances to which the hon. Member refers is prescribed in accordance with rules issued by the Local Government Board, and under Section 58, Sub-section 2, of the Local Government Act, recoupment is only allowed in respect of one-half the cost of such medicines and appliances as are prescribed by that list. The Board have no information of any cases of the character mentioned in the third paragraph, but if particulars of such cases are given they will be inquired into. The Board's list of medicines, numbering 416 articles, and medical and surgical appliances, numbering 162 articles, has been most carefully prepared, and has received the approval of the Royal Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons in Ireland, and contains, in the Board's opinion, all the medicines and dressings, and other requisites necessary for ordinary workhouse and dispensary practice.

IRISH ECCLESIASTICAL LANDS.

MR. O'NEILL (Antrim, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, inasmuch as in the pursuance of the provisions of the Act 3 and 4 Will. 4, c. 37, the lessees of the lands held under bishops and other sole ecclesiastical commissioners in Ireland were empowered to purchase a perpetual estate in such lands at a perpetual rent, to be ascertained in the manner prescribed by the said Act, he could state to the House what is the annual amount of the rent now paid to the Irish Land Commission by such lessees; whether, as under Section 142 of the said Act the parties interested are entitled to have the rents revised every seven years, according to the increase or decrease in the price of corn or wheat for the seven years from the date from which the previous revision was made, and that the Act requires the calculation to be based upon returns published in the *Dublin Gazette*, he is aware that in consequence of the non-publication in the *Dublin Gazette* for some years of the average required by the Statute, no

application could or can now be made to have the rents payable by the lessees revised in accordance with the Statute; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will take the necessary steps to enable all the lessees whose rents could not have been revised, in consequence of the default of the publishers of the *Dublin Gazette*, to apply to have their rents revised in the manner provided by the Act?

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: The word "lessees" at the conclusion of the first paragraph has apparently been used in error for "purchasers," as the 142nd Section of the Statute referred to applies to purchasers and not lessees. The amount of perpetuity rents payable on the 31st March last to the Land Commission by such purchasers was £53,000. The statements in the second paragraph appear to be correct. As already stated, I cannot undertake to introduce legislation dealing with the case of the tenants referred to during the present session.

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY.

MR. MACALEESE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state upon what date Sergeants Luke Clarke and Bernard Grant ceased to be members of the Royal Irish Constabulary mounted force; whether he can state the names of the two acting sergeants promoted to the vacancies; and if the vacancies have not been filled, can he state the reasons.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: The two sergeants named in the question ceased to belong to the mounted force on the 1st April last. Acting-sergeant Robert Carson has been promoted to fill one of the vacancies. The other vacancy will not be filled unless the exigencies of the Service require it.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

GENERAL RUSSELL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he can state when the War Office Vote will be taken.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will state when the Scottish Estimates will be taken.

MR. ASQUITH (Fife, E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can now state on what day the Home

Office Vote will be taken; my object is rather to elicit in what order the Votes will be taken next Friday.

SIR CHARLES CAMERON: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury when it is proposed to resume consideration of the Scottish Votes in Committee of Supply.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (MR. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): In regard to the questions about Supply, perhaps the House will permit me not to settle what Supply is to be taken more than a week in advance. As to the question of the right hon. Gentleman the late Home Secretary, the Home Office Vote will be taken next Friday. Some English Votes in Class 3 will be put down first, but I think this will leave ample time for the discussion of the Home Office Votes, the importance of which, of course, I fully recognise. We shall require the three extra days for Supply which we are permitted to have under the Sessional Order, and I shall move a resolution to that effect next Friday.

SIR H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton): Will the right hon. Gentleman undertake that the Home Office Vote shall come on not later than 9 o'clock? The other Votes he puts down may occupy the whole evening, and therefore the Home Office Vote, which we think this year to be more important than usual, would have no chance.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I will endeavour to find time for it, but I hope the House will second me in trying to get some of the Votes in Class 3.

MR. DAVITT: When will the Colonial Office Vote be reached?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid I cannot make a promise on this subject. I do not think it will be expedient in all probability to bring the Vote on at a very early date.

THE COMPANIES BILL.

MR. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he expects to pass the Companies Bill this session.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The wise man indulges in as few expectations as possible at this time of the session, and in many

cases keeps those expectations to himself. I should not like to venture on prophecy at this period of the session as to what will be the fate of this measure.

THE TRANSVAAL.

MR. SAMUEL SMITH (Flintshire): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the proposals for international arbitration made by our representatives at The Hague, and the strong desire throughout Europe in favour of the peaceful settlement of international disputes, the Government will suggest some mode of arbitration to the South African Republic which, while recognising the suzerainty of this country, will provide for impartial adjudication on all the points in dispute between the two countries.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It would be premature to make any statement as to what proposals her Majesty's Government may make to the South African Republic. They have already refused the arbitration of any foreign Power.

MR. DAVITT: Does the right hon. Gentleman, on behalf of the Government, claim suzerain rights over the South African Republic?

(No answer was given.)

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been directed to speeches on public platforms and articles in the public Press attacking the President of the South African Republic, and tending to disturb the friendship and peace subsisting between Great Britain and the South African Republic; and whether, as in the case of John Vint, who in 1799 was prosecuted in the King's Bench for a libel on the Emperor of Russia, and Peltier, who was in 1803 prosecuted in the King's Bench for a libel on Napoleon Buonaparte, First Consul of France, steps will be taken to bring to justice persons engaged in this country in these attacks on the Transvaal Government and the President.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know what speeches the hon. Gentleman refers to, but there has no doubt been criticism in the English Press upon the action of the Transvaal Government as being

likely to lead to some interference in the friendly relations between the two countries. As regards the precedent quoted in the second part of the question, it seems to me to be in the first place old, and in the second place hardly relevant.

ROYAL NIGER COMPANY (CONSOLIDATED FUND).

Committee to consider of authorising the issue, out of the Consolidated Fund, of sums to be paid in connection with the revocation of the Charter of the Royal Niger Company (Queen's Recommendation signified), upon Monday next.—(*The Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

MR. WODEHOUSE reported from the Committee of Selection; that they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure:—Mr. Woods; and had appointed in substitution, Mr. Humphreys-Owen.

MR. WODEHOUSE further reported from the Committee; that they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures:—Mr. Bryce; and had appointed in substitution, Mr. James Stuart.

Reports to lie upon the Table.

GOVERNMENT OF SCOTLAND.

Bill to amend the provision for the future Government of Scotland, ordered to be brought in by Mr. Pirie, Mr. Birrell, Sir Charles Cameron, Dr. Clark, Dr. Farquharson, Mr. M'Crae, Mr. Edmund Robertson, Mr. Thomas Shaw, Sir Thomas Esmonde, Mr. Lloyd-George, and Mr. Moulton.

GOVERNMENT OF SCOTLAND BILL.

"To amend the provision for the future Government of Scotland," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 26th July, and to be printed. (Bill 254.)

SUPPLY [17TH ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Civil Service Estimates, 1890–1900.

CLASS I.

1. £29,936, to complete the sum for Railways, Ireland.

CLASS II.

2. £2,797, to complete the sum for Household of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I do not intend to divide the House on this item, although it is essential that I should say a few words upon it. I wish to point out that not a single sovereign out of this large sum which we are asked to vote goes to any purpose of public utility. It is expenditure of an unproductive kind. From first to last this sum is simply voted away as a kind of outdoor relief for hangers-on at Dublin Castle; in other words, for the idle and lounging classes of society. The recipients are younger scions of Unionist Peers. It is only necessary for me to quote one item to prove what reckless extravagance it is. Thank God, the Irish Church has been disestablished, but still in the Castle, which is the refuge of all things base and bad, we have an Irish Church Establishment, and no less than £769 is asked for the purpose of keeping up the services in Dublin Castle chapel. These services are not attended by the Lord Lieutenant. The chapel is used simply as a garrison chapel, and the military chaplains have their expenses and salaries provided for under another vote. The Chapel Royal is one gigantic job for the purpose of giving money to a gentleman who does not earn it—Dean Dickinson. In this villainous Vote we are asked to grant a sum under false pretences—we are asked to give a certain amount as a house allowance to the chaplain. Under the old system the chaplain used to have rooms in Dublin Castle. He does not have them now. He is Vicar of St. Anne's Church, Dublin, the parishioners of which have raised a very fine, commodious, and comfortable parsonage house for him, and for the use of that he does not have to pay one farthing rent. Yet we are asked to give him £150 as an allowance for the rooms

in Dublin Castle which he does not use. This may be a pious fraud, but it is a most nefarious one. Has the right hon. Gentleman any excuse for it? Can he explain away this gross and villainous job? This is another of those transactions which we so often find in connection with that sink of impurity—Dublin Castle. Why should Dean Dickinson have £150 for nothing? I should like to ask, further, for some explanation of another paltry sum—a charge of £100 for travelling and incidental expenses. We have no information given us as to who travels, or why the travelling is done, or why the charge is put upon public funds.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. G. W. BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): The hon. Member has expended a very great wealth of eloquence on this subject. He has selected a particular item, and he has described it as gross, villainous, and nefarious. I trust that the English and Scotch Members who may have heard his language will be able to judge from it what importance they are to attach to the strong words of hon. Members opposite. This charge has come down from time immemorial. This gentleman has held the office of chaplain for a large number of years, and the remuneration attached to the office has always been a salary and house allowance. In the present instance the house is not required, the premises are therefore utilised for another purpose, and, according to common practice, a money allowance is made in lieu thereof. The criticism of the hon. Member is paltry in the extreme. If there is to be a Court at Dublin Castle it is only right and proper that there should be a clergyman attached to it. Considering that the entire cost of the Castle establishment is only just over £4,000, in addition to the Lord Lieutenant's salary of £20,000, and that every Lord Lieutenant in turn finds it necessary to spend another £20,000 out of his own money, I think that these attacks are paltry in the extreme. If the hon. Member wishes to attack the system, let him move to alter it entirely, and do away with the office of Lord Lieutenant, but as long as there is a Lord Lieutenant, and as long as there is a Court attached to the Lord Lieutenancy, I think it is really unworthy of hon. Members to make such attacks as that just delivered by the hon. Member for South Donegal.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: To show the depth of the right hon. Gentleman's ignorance of Irish transactions, let me point out that, although I have attacked but one item in the charge for the spiritual welfare of the Castle establishment, we had a distinct pledge that this ecclesiastical establishment is not to be revived. I therefore say it is nefarious that we should be called upon to vote this money. Here is Dean Dickinson, a most respectable man, asking for £150 for a house which he does not occupy in order to pay the rent of a house which he holds rent free. In 1878 a distinct pledge was given that when Dean Dickinson goes to another sphere of influence, Dublin Castle will cease to exist as a spiritual institution.

MR. DAVITT (Mayo, S.): The right hon. Gentleman assumes that the people of Ireland are desirous to maintain the institution of the Lord Lieutenancy. I wish to assure him, from my knowledge of popular feeling in Ireland, that he is labouring under a very great mistake. I should be very glad to see this institution, and the English Rule, bag and baggage, leave Ireland to-morrow, and that is the overwhelming sentiment of the great majority of the Irish people. I venture to think that if the £40,000 now wasted upon these head-quarters of social snobbery in Dublin were expended in promoting Irish industries or technical education, it would confer far greater benefits on the people of Ireland.

Vote agreed to.

3. £1,229, to complete the sum for Charitable Donations and Bequests Office, Ireland.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): In regard to this Vote, I wish to ask attention to a case which I brought before the House a year and a half ago, in connection with a certain bequest in my own constituency. I have to complain that the Commissioner of Charitable Donations and Bequests has not shown due diligence in attending to the matter. It has relation to a bequest of £5 or £6 a year, which is supposed to be administered by the Protestant rector and Roman Catholic priest jointly. A few years ago a gentleman responsible for the payment of the sum refused to pay it any longer, on the ground that some property

on which it was a charge had been sold. But it has since been discovered that the sum was charged on the entire property, and not merely on that portion which has been sold. We are therefore anxious that the Commissioner shall do what he can to recover this charity, which is for the benefit of the very poor.

Vote agreed to.

4. £3,900, to comple the sum for Public Record Office, Ireland.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: This is another Vote on which I should like to say a few words, although it is not my intention to divide the Committee upon it. I think, indeed, the point embodied in it could be better raised on the Vote for the Chief Secretary's salary, and I will therefore only now give a general outline of what may be the purport of my attack if we are permitted to have a Parliamentary fling at that interesting individual. This is a Vote for the keeping of State papers. The late Keeper who, I am sorry to say, is dead, was a very admirable and courteous official, and displayed the greatest enthusiasm in his work. Now, I submit that it is of very great advantage that the important historic documents in Dublin Castle should be seen by the public. They are already seen by members of the public whose political credentials satisfy Dublin Castle. I submit that for historic purposes I ought to have had access to some of these documents. In the usual course I applied to see certain documents and State papers which had relation to the Rebellion of 1798, and the passing of the Act of Union. There is a general rule that these documents after 1793 should not be seen without special permission. I wanted to see them for purposes of historical research, and I was particularly anxious, for reasons which are perfectly obvious, to find out about some of the corrupt transactions which occurred in reference to the Act of Union, and the precise sums which were paid. I also wanted to get the briefs held by Counsel for the State prisoner who was bribed with Government cash to betray his clients' secrets. I knew that these documents were to be found at Dublin Castle. How did I know that? Because it is stated in the history written by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dublin University that he was permitted by the

Government to see these documents. I therefore applied to see them myself, but to my astonishment permission was refused me. I publicly accuse the Chief Secretary that, while he is asking for money for the preservation of State documents for the public use, he is only allowing such documents to be perused by his own friends, who will use them gingerly and not against the Act of Union or the vile establishment of which he is only temporarily, and only very temporarily I hope, the head. I will go further into the matter on the Vote for the right hon. Gentleman's salary, and when we reach that I can promise to give him an uncomfortable half-hour.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: I am sure that any speech delivered by the right hon. Gentleman against me will entertain me very much, whether it lasts a quarter or a half-hour, or even one hour. But as this is only a kind of preliminary skirmish which he intends to develop in battle array on a later occasion, I will only say now that I had no intention of depriving him of any privilege to which he was properly entitled. As far as I recollect the circumstances, they were these. The hon. Member referred specifically to two papers, and requested that he should have permission to see them. It was granted in the usual course. He then made a further request that he should be given power to examine any of the State papers up to the latest date that anybody else had examined them. As this was not a request to see specific papers, but was for permission to rummage among the archives at large, I inquired if there was any precedent for granting it. I was told that a request of that kind was unusual, if not altogether unprecedented.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: There is a precedent for it.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: I made inquiries from the officials, and was told that no such request had been made in the past. I informed the hon. Member that a vague permission of the kind could not be granted.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): It appears to me, from the answer of the right hon. Gentleman, that he is raising a technical point in order to justify his refusal to my hon. friend of permission to examine

these papers. I know it is the custom in regard to State documents to fix a date, beyond which such papers are not allowed to be examined, and I understand, from the statement of my hon. friend, that up to a certain period that date was supposed to be 1793. Yet it is clear that others have been allowed to see papers of a later date, and that no limitation has been put upon researches up to 1803, and later; for in the histories of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dublin University and Mr. Froude, we find copious extracts from these copious secret State papers. All my hon. friend desired was to have the same facilities granted him as were given to these other writers. His distinguished researches in the history of the period of the Union surely entitle him to make that request. As a matter of fact, the hon. Member has done good service in publishing some of these papers, among them two very extraordinary and interesting documents referred to in Mr. Lecky's history, which he explains in a footnote he did not publish because they were of a very revolting and horrible type. I repeat that my hon. friend ought surely to have the same facilities granted to him as are given to other writers.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: What passed between myself and the hon. Member for South Donegal was prior to the publication of the papers referred to by the hon. Member for East Mayo. It is true that no one has a right to see these papers after a certain date, and the permission to see them after a certain date is strictly by favour. Before giving a general permission to inspect the papers it is desirable to know for what purpose the search is to be made. The right hon. Member for the University of Dublin and Mr. Froude are historians of very great repute; and the reserve and caution of the right hon. Member for the University of Dublin was shown by the fact that he did not think it desirable to publish the papers afterwards published by the hon. Member for South Donegal, after he had found from a footnote in the right hon. Gentleman's history that the papers existed. The hon. Member asked to see them; the permission was granted; and the hon. Member immediately availed himself of it to publish the documents. To judge from the action of the hon.

Member, he wished to study the documents from the point of view, not of the impartial historian, but of the partisan. Under these circumstances I can only say that the speech of the hon. Member for East Mayo will make me think twice or three times before granting any general permission asked from me in the future.

MR. DILLON: I am glad that this Debate has taken place. The question has now assumed a surprising shape and colour, which certainly satisfies me as to the real attitude of the right hon. Gentleman. He charges my hon. friend with a desire to use these State papers for a partisan purpose.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: What I have said now I say simply in consequence of what I have heard to-day. The permission I gave the hon. Member, and the permission which I refused to him, were given and refused before I knew anything of what papers he wished to see.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: That is not the case.

MR. DILLON: I will now deal with the position the right hon. Gentleman has taken up, and I venture to affirm that he will find it to be an absolutely untenable and indefensible position. He charges my hon. friend, who I beg leave to say is an historian of repute, although he may not be so in comparison with Froude and Lecky, with wishing to use the papers for partisan purposes. Let me remind the right hon. Gentleman that my hon. friend has written important works. And let me also ask him if he thinks that anyone who has read Froude's "History of the English in Ireland in the 18th Century" will deny that that is a most outrageously partisan history. There never was a more violently partisan book than that. I say that, although I believe there is not in this House to-day, or in this country, a greater admirer of Mr. Froude than I am. The history of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dublin University is infinitely more fair, but yet his later volumes cannot be read without seeing in them evidence of partisanship, although I admit he struggles against it. At this time of day is a Party Minister to attempt to judge who shall deal with the history of a period, and who shall be disqualified

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from doing so? The irresistible and logical consequence of such a position would be that under a Liberal Government none but Home Rule historians and under a Tory Government none but Unionist historians would have access to the records. Was there ever in the history of literature such a principle laid down? The right hon. Gentleman finds fault with my hon. friend with regard to the publication of the two documents to which I have referred. But they were specially interesting as clearing up a *suppressio veri* as to the character of an important person. The right hon. Gentleman is practically undertaking a censorship. The right hon. Member for Dublin University thought it prudent not to make known some of the evils and crimes of the class with which he sympathised, so he suppressed these letters; and the hon. Member for South Donegal, who naturally had no such prudential considerations to study in this particular case by publishing the documents, simply left it to the public to form a judgment. This is not a question of authenticity; it is rather a case of the right hon. Gentleman sitting in judgment, and declaring that Mr. Lecky, the historian, exercised a prudent reserve in suppressing certain discreditable documents. If such principles are to be accepted, then the writing of history becomes a fraud. The right hon. Gentleman has refused to open these records in Dublin Castle to my hon. and learned friend, which he has opened to Mr. Lecky and Mr. Froude, because he says these gentlemen have exercised a prudent restraint. That is no way to deal with public documents. I venture to say that the right hon. Gentleman has taken a position which it is absolutely impossible to maintain.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: The hon. Member for East Mayo appears to charge me with taking up the position, that while I am perfectly ready to open these records to anybody who will write history from my point of view, I will not open them to anyone with whose opinions I do not agree.

MR. DILLON: My point is that you open these records to men who are Unionists and not to men who are Nationalists.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: I see no reason for the hon. Gentleman's inter-

ruption. Supposing that these documents are not open to the public up to a certain date except by the special permission of the Lord Lieutenant or the Chief Secretary—although I believe the restrictions are greater in some offices than in others—it is clear that the Chief Secretary or the Lord Lieutenant in giving permission to any individual to see these papers must be guided by certain general principles. And if anybody applied, for instance, to inspect these papers from a purely historical point of view, unless for very special reasons, he would be allowed to do so. My right hon. friend the Member for Dublin University desired to inspect these papers on that ground, and he was permitted to do so; and if the hon. Member desired in a historical way to deal with them, in all probability the Chief Secretary for the time being would not have withheld his permission any more than he had done to Mr. Froude and Mr. Lecky. But when the hon. Gentleman asked for an inspection of these two papers he immediately proceeded to publish them, not in an essay or in a historical work, but in the *Freeman's Journal*, and he made use of these papers in order, not to throw light on the events of a previous period, but so as to inflame men's passions in this present year. If I had reason to believe, as I had, that the aim of the hon. Member was not so much historical as partisan, I should think twice before I gave permission to inspect all the records.

*MR. HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.): There is nothing we want more in Ireland than a true history of Ireland, which has never yet been written and can never be written without access to some of the documents in Dublin Castle. Now, no country can be prosperous and no country can hold its position until its history is known—a history written, not by a partisan, not written on false evidence, but on documents that cannot err. I should like very much to know—as it will assist the House very much to form an opinion on this episode between the Chief Secretary and the hon. Member for South Donegal—the date of that Order which drew the line at 1793. I can understand why the public should not have access to anything in the nature of modern documents which would involve living men, who, perhaps, might have no opportunity of clearing themselves; but the further we recede from 1793

the less reason is there for excluding any responsible member of the public from access to these documents. That rule was made, I believe, thirty years ago or upwards. It strikes me that any document from 1793 to say 1820 might be published in perfect safety so far as living persons are concerned. We want to know exactly what the history of our country has been, and how the country has been brought to its present position. Therefore, I think, when a gentleman filling the position of my hon. and learned friend, one of Her Majesty's counsel, who for some years has been in the honourable and responsible position of professor of Constitutional Law in King's Inn, Dublin, who is a writer of considerable experience and repute, applies for access to papers of this character, I do think that it is rather unreasonable to make it a condition before granting that permission: "Tell me for what purpose you want these papers?" Of course, the man in the street should not have the right to go into Dublin Castle and ask permission to poke over all these old records, for we do not know how that right might be abused. But it was rather hard on a man holding the high political and literary position the hon. Gentleman does, to ask him to give a pledge that if he looks at these papers he will not make any use of them—the more especially when the right hon. Gentleman's predecessor admitted these famous literary characters, Mr. Froude and Mr. Lecky to have access to the papers. For my part, I think everything ought to give way to truth and light in dealing with the past; and whether these documents were to be published in the shape of a letter to the *Freeman's Journal*, or in a more elaborate form in a chapter of a work by my learned friend opposite, the cause of justice would be served by giving access to these papers to any gentleman whose antecedents were a guarantee that the privilege would not be abused.

*MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I have no desire to prolong the discussion on this Vote, but I venture to say that the claim of censorship by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary is constitutionally unsound. His two speeches were to the effect that my hon. friend, whose qualifications have been referred to by previous speakers, wished to inspect the records in Dublin Castle not so much to throw light

upon past events in the history of Ireland as to inflame men's passions. What is that but saying that these documents are of such an extraordinary nature as to inflame men's passions. I would have thought that the right hon. Gentleman was anxious for the truth, and that he would have given the hon. Gentleman access at once to these documents. I am old enough to remember that when Father Burke was lecturing in America, Mr. Froude got possession of documents in connection with the occurrences in 1641, and published a most virulent and inaccurate pamphlet, which was calculated to inflame passion in America, but Father Burke completely shattered the position of Mr. Froude. That was at the time Mr. Froude was drawing from the archives of Dublin Castle his weapons with which to assail the National cause. After all, the right hon. Gentleman is only a temporary occupant of the office of Chief Secretary, and he has no claim to set up in the position of censor, and to say that all fruitful and useful inquiry into these documents shall be debarred for ever. The right hon. Gentleman speaks about partisans. But I want to know if it would have been possible for the "Rise of the Dutch Republic" to have been written, or the "Life and Character of Philip II. of Spain," had the custodian of the archives at The Hague said to Mr. Motley, "You are a Protestant historian, and you are going to write on a bigoted Catholic monarch, and I will not allow you to examine our records." The claim of the right hon. the Chief Secretary is one which cannot be constitutionally, politically, or historically sustained.

MR. LECKY (Dublin University): In considering the way in which archives of this kind should be treated there are two things that ought to be thought of. One is the distance of period—and it should be remembered that a great portion of these archives deal with people who are the grandfathers of people now living. The other is the spirit in which they are approached. No man, of whatever political opinion, ought to be denied access to these documents of whom it can be said that he is a genuine student of history, who intends to use those documents for real historical and not for mere political purposes, who is sincerely desirous to bring out the lights and shades on both

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sides. There is another class of persons, however, who would merely use those confidential documents for the purpose of exciting passion between two nations by selecting facts on one side and leaving out all facts on the other, and who are above all things anxious to wound and hurt those now living who differ from them by raking up some scandal which occurred in the days of their grandfathers. I think the Government are quite right in discriminating between these two classes. I believe that a discretionary power is necessary and that it is very properly put in the hands of the Chief Secretary.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: The right hon. Gentleman has a wonderful memory. He has repeated almost word for word his own criticism of Mr. Froude in his second volume of "England in the Eighteenth Century," when he said that he only threw a light on everything that was favourable to his own views, and suppressed facts which were not, and that that was not the way in which to write history. In 1886 I went for the first time to the Irish Record Office, accompanied by the late Dean Liddell, and saw for the first time the place where these manuscripts are kept. Sir Bernard Burke showed us over the premises, and of one of the rooms said, "It's here that Lecky and Froude worked, but I never let them in together, because I was afraid they would box."

MR. LECKY: We were never in Dublin together.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Probably not, but I want to know why was permission given to Froude, a partisan writer on one side, and refused to me, a partisan writer on the other, although I declare I have never suppressed the truth, and I have never, so far as I am aware, acted unfairly and, what is more, have never been accused of doing so.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: It is the spirit in which these documents are approached. (Laughter.) I do not know why hon. Members laugh, for that is a simple statement of how the matter stands.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Who is to be the judge of the "spirit"? Is it a partisan Chief Secretary?

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: I am not aware that the hon. Gentleman has written historical works.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: The right hon. Gentleman lacks one essential requisite for a Chief Secretary, and that is a good memory. What occurred was this. For several months before this transaction I had written day by day a series of articles in the *Freeman's Journal* entitled "A Diary in the Irish Rebellion," and it was my wish to show, as far as I could, to the Irish people the events which were taking place 100 years ago. The 18th of November was the date of Wolfe Tone's death, and I found in the work of Mr. Lecky, from which I had derived enormous assistance, that there were two heartless letters connected with the incident which I desired to get hold of. So I went to the Castle, and was, to my surprise, referred to Sir David Harrell, who is a personal friend of mine. He was out, and I called next day, but instead of seeing him I was ushered into a little ante-room, where office-hunters are, I suppose, usually shown. Then one of the clerks or under-strappers, with an expression of half-cunning and half-stupidity in his face, came and asked me what I wanted. I informed him, and asked him to say that if I did not see Sir David I would address a letter to the Lord Lieutenant and give him two columns in every paper in Dublin. So in came Sir David. The requests that I made in a formal letter were to see the two documents referred to, and a general statement of my desire to see general documents up to a certain date for a literary purpose. Sir David told me that I would get an answer within one hour, and, sure enough, an answer came saying that I was entitled to see the documents of the 18th of November, 1798, but as regards the second request it would receive further consideration. I went to the Castle, took copies of the documents, and incorporated them in the articles which appeared in due course in the *Freeman's Journal*—articles which were really an historic study of the times, and which I intend eventually to publish in book form. I did not use them pre-eminently for a political purpose. I was most anxious to show what occurred, because we can never understand the present without thoroughly and properly understanding the past. For three weeks

I heard no more, and then my further request was refused. It is a shame to show documents to political supporters, and refuse them to those whose bias—if there is a bias—is in an opposite direction. It is a pretty exhibition that the Chief Secretary now makes on the floor of the House in defence of such action. I am sorry to have detained the Committee so long, but I think the discussion will have done good if it has unmasked Dublin Castle, and proved the Chief Secretary to be one of the most incompetent and indiscreet of Ministers.

MR. ASQUITH (Fife, E.), who was very indistinctly heard, was understood to say: There are one or two points which are worthy of the consideration of the Committee. We all agree with what was said a few moments ago, that there is a limit of time, for obvious reasons, beyond which documents of this kind should not be accessible to what I may call, for want of a better phrase, "the man in the street"; when they ought to be kept under lock and key under a responsible custodian, and access given to people who are honestly engaged in *bond fide* historical research. I was surprised to hear from the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary that the custodian of these documents might and ought to use his discretion according to the view which the executive of the time take of the partisanship of the person who applies for access to them.

MR. BALFOUR: No, Sir, I did not mean that. I was trying to explain that that was a misapprehension, and that that was not the case.

MR. ASQUITH: I am glad we have had that explanation, because I was going to say that if that doctrine was going to be laid down it would be very dangerous. I do not believe there has ever been an historian who has not exhibited some amount of partisanship; it is a common infirmity of the tribe. With regard to my hon. and learned friend, in respect of whom this particular question arises, knowing him as I do, I say that he does come within the class of *bond fide* historians; that he has contributed valuable works towards the elucidation of the History of Ireland, and that he should have the same facilities of access to these documents as other historians.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD (York): I am sure the Chief Secretary tries, so far as he can, to bury the rancorous feeling which obtains in all matters connected with Ireland. Hon. Members on that side, and we on this, feel very strongly on various matters, but a great deal of this feeling of rancour is due to the feeling on the other side of the House, that there is a want of fair play on the part of the Government. I cannot help thinking that the explanation of the Chief Secretary under these circumstances was most unfortunate. Either these papers are meant for the public or they are not.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: They are not.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD: Then it lies with the Chief Secretary to say who shall have access to them and who shall not. People who want access to these papers want it for the purposes of making an historical account, and I think it is a little unfortunate that the people who have access to them should sit on this side of the House—

MR. DILLON: All of them.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD: And not upon the other. I am not going into the rights or wrongs of the case, but as an Irishman I desire to see this rancorous feeling buried. I do not think it is right that the Chief Secretary should allow his own supporters to see these papers, and not allow the same privilege to those Gentlemen who happen to oppose his political views.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: These papers are not public, and the Lord Lieutenant and the Chief Secretary have cast upon them the duty of saying who may see them and who may not. There certainly ought to be no distinction whatever between an historian holding the political views which we hold on this side of the House and one holding opposite views. I should never dream of refusing access on that account. The question is, for what purpose these papers were going to be used, and in what spirit—[loud laughter from the Irish Benches]. Hon. Members opposite laugh, but I express exactly the same view as was expressed by the right hon. Gentleman opposite.

MR. ASQUITH: I certainly demur. I do not accept the right hon. Gentleman's expression, "in what spirit."

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: I do not wish to suggest that anybody genuinely occupied in historical research should not have access to these papers; and that is exactly the sentiment expressed by my right hon. friend.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): I really must say I much regret both the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary and that of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Dublin University, and I will begin with the latter first. The reason I regret that speech is that the right hon. Gentleman is a man of letters and a well-known historian, and for a man of letters to get up in this House and defend the position taken up by the Chief Secretary with regard to the control of these State papers is distressing. The second reason why his speech was unfortunate is that he would deny to another man of letters the facilities given to himself. I am a great admirer of the right hon. Gentleman's works, and I know nothing more entertaining than his pages on the secret history of Ireland immediately preceding the Act of Union, where he produces McNally the barrister, who sold his secrets and briefs to the Government. He was counsel for Robert Emmett, and embraced him just before his execution, after having by his treachery handed him over to the gallows. The secret papers of McNally, the informer and spy of the Government, appear in the right hon. Gentleman's work page upon page and add greatly to the effect, and yet the right hon. Gentleman gets up and defends the attitude of the Chief Secretary. The right hon. Gentleman's proposition is that the matter depended a good deal on the spirit in which the papers were to be used, and also whether they were to be used for inflaming party passions. The right hon. Gentleman may make a speech in the most passive and subdued language, which, in my opinion, is calculated to inflame the party passions of gentlemen who agree with him and with whom I disagree. Such definitions are untenable. I should like to have a definition of the word "spirit." The Chief Secretary went on to suggest as his

definition that my hon. friend was refused these papers because he was going to print them in the columns of the *Freeman's Journal*. Is the *Freeman's Journal* an indecent organ because it does not happen to agree with the opinions of the right hon. Gentleman? One of the most honourable traits of the journalism of to-day is that the daily Press deal with great literary and historical questions, but the mere fact of their being daily papers with political views does not deprive them of the right of dealing seriously with historical questions. Would the right hon. Gentleman say that the *Daily Express* should get these things, but that they should be refused to the *Freeman's Journal*? I understood the right hon. Gentleman to say the documents were refused to my hon. friend because they were to be printed in the *Freeman's Journal* — a partisan paper.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: No; I did not say I refused them for any such reason, but because there was no precedent.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: No precedent! Can any documents be more confidential, more secret, or belong more to the category of papers which ought to be kept under lock and key, except in exceptional circumstances, than the secret reports of a spy and an informer of the meetings of a conspiracy? Such secret documents were actually supplied to the Member for the Dublin University, and yet, in the face of that fact, the right hon. Gentleman says the reason of the refusal to my hon. friend was that there was no precedent. The law is now laid down that the desire to publish in a Nationalist newspaper constitutes an unfitness to be entrusted with documents which are open to the gaze of a Unionist historian for the purpose of advocating his principles. If the people of Ireland come to the conclusion that, not satisfied with his partisan administration of to-day, the right hon. Gentleman extends that partisan administration to matters of literature and history, the right hon. Gentleman has only himself to blame.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER (Belfast, W.): I do not know which particular paper it is that has been refused, but it has been suggested that it is a matter of refusing to members of one political party

something which is given to members of another political party. That is not quite the case. Suppose the documents related to 1798, and dealt with the avowed rebellion against this country. It could not be said that that policy had been entirely abandoned. We have heard over and over again that the policy of 1798 was the policy of hon. Members opposite to-day, and that the only thing which prevented their carrying an armed rebellion to a successful issue was lack of opportunity. It is not unreasonable to make a distinction in this or any other country between those, to whichever party they belong, who desire to see the Government of the country carried on successfully, and those who openly challenge the very existence of the Government, and would destroy the Government if they had the chance. There must be some discretion in regard to these documents when we know that there are members of a party who undoubtedly would make every effort and use every means necessary to carry out the policy to which I have alluded. If there is any doubt felt as to the policy of an armed rebellion against the Crown being the policy which is not only adopted but openly avowed by certain hon. Members opposite, I am perfectly prepared to prove my statement. This is not a question of denying to Irishmen things which ought to be given them, but it is a question of safeguarding the primary interests of the State, and I should certainly support a policy which reserves to the Executive Government of the country some right of discretion. It may be that if there was a change of Government an absolutely opposite view might be taken, but I have very strong reasons to think the contrary would be the case. I remember when this very question of documents came up one of the first things Sir George Trevelyan did was to give an assurance that these documents should not pass into the hands of the Government it was proposed to set up, and I think that that principle would always prevail with British Ministers from whatever section they were drawn, or to whatever party they belonged.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): As regards the general principle of granting facilities to both parties to inspect documents, I could not add anything to what has been said with force and truth by my

right hon. friend the Member for East Fife. But on the general question of keeping documents secret there is no country in Europe which is so scrupulous and so old-fashioned in imposing secrecy upon its public documents as is this country. I remember an instance in which a distinguished American scholar applied for permission to see some public document relating to the outbreak of the American War, but was refused, because, he was told, they were still considered secret. Really it seems a little absurd that at this time of day we should suppose that anything which happened so far back as, say, 1776 could possibly injure this country in any way. It would be to the general advantage of historical science and to the general satisfaction of all parties in this country if the period during which documents are to be considered as being secret and confidential was brought much nearer down to our own time than at present is the case both in Ireland and in England. What reason can be given for keeping these documents secret? Not, I think, that their publicity would hurt the feelings of persons now living with regard to their grandfathers; we cannot carry the application of the respect of persons so far as that. Nor that they relate to events which still are discussed on political platforms. We might discuss political events relative to the great Civil War, but that is no reason for making these documents secret. I would submit that there are only two grounds on which it is right that we should keep secret documents relative to events of the past. I agree there are exceptions. Those grounds are, firstly, if there is anything in the papers which is going to put us at a disadvantage in our negotiations with foreign States; and secondly, if there is anything which will interfere with the efficiency of the existing Government or which will expose any secrets or reveal methods which it would not be in the interests of the public service to make known. But surely these grounds cannot possibly be made to apply to the documents relating to the Irish Rebellion of 1798. We know all about that rebellion, and we know enough for the purpose of making up our minds as to the conduct of the principal actors in that great struggle, and the historical inferences to be drawn from it. I believe that the more historical facts are known the better it is for all parties. It is well, I think, that par-

Mr. Bryce.

ticularly in the case of Ireland these facts should be made known. I do not think that there is any danger in this respect. With regard to historians I think if there was ever anyone who wrote with a distinct political bias, and tarnished his name by importing political malignity into his writings, it was Mr. Froude. And yet his book has had the very opposite effect, and no facts that can be published now about the Irish Rebellion of 1798, or Roman Catholic emancipation, can really affect the politics of this country or the policy of the Government. I submit, therefore, that my right hon. friend opposite would do well to consider whether there might not be a relaxation of these rules, and whether the period ought not to be brought down much nearer the present time, so that these difficulties will no longer arise.

SIR T. ESMONDE (Kerry, W.): I think the Chief Secretary would be wise in allowing these papers to be published. What we want to know is the truth, and the only way in which the truth can be arrived at is by publishing the correspondence and State papers for the period in question. The objections raised to the publication of these papers would lead one to suppose that there is something we are afraid to have published. If that is so, it is all the more reason why we should persist in our demand.

MR. DILLON: There are still remaining one or two other points which I desire to raise which appear to me to be of great importance. The hon. Member for West Belfast has laid down a doctrine which is the guiding principle and Irish practice in this matter, and which was laid down by the Chief Secretary for Ireland in his first speech, namely, that these are matters historical in one sense, but still political, and that you must decide who shall have access to these documents on political principles.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: No, no!

MR. DILLON: The Chief Secretary had laid down that the authority in Dublin should consider the object for which access to these papers was sought, and the spirit in which they would be used. Now, when we import such a consideration as that into the question, who

is to be the judge? It must be manifest to all that if the Chief Secretary is to be allowed to judge of the spirit in which the investigator is to use the documents before he gives his permission, there is no freedom whatever in the matter.

MR. RENTOUL (Down, E.): There must be some discretion.

MR. DILLON: Discretion ought not to exist in regard to the spirit of the investigation; it ought to only exist in regard to the general qualification. When a man who has done *bonâ fide* historical work comes and makes a demand to see these documents, then, I say, discretion ought to cease. If you allow discretion in such cases as that, you establish a censorship which does away with all investigation. Now, what is the position taken up by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin? He defended the position of the Chief Secretary on the ground that these papers were of such a character and of so confidential a nature that the granting of permission to see these documents requires reserve, prudence, and judicious treatment. Now in what regard is the judicious spirit to be exercised in the judgment of the investigator? The condition laid down is that he must be a man whom they can trust. The Chief Secretary practically set up in his speech this proposition—that he would deny access to these papers to the man who was a political partisan, and would only grant the right to the man who could be trusted to approach the study of the papers in a fair, impartial, and calm spirit. That is a very curious condition indeed. I do not know where there is a man living to-day who can be described as a man of “a fair, impartial, and calm spirit.” Why, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dublin University has himself written some of the strongest and almost fierce articles and made speeches in support of the Union, and what right has he to claim a fair, impartial, and calm spirit any more than I have? What right has the Chief Secretary to sit in judgment upon such a question, for he would be inclined to hold that my right hon. friend opposite is impartial because he is in favour of the Union, and that I am not impartial because I am against the Union. That is what this discretion will practically amount to so

long as human nature is constituted as it is at present. What is really the grievance of my hon. friend? It is, that he applied by letter to the right hon. Gentleman to get the same privileges as were given to the Member for the University of Dublin, and he was refused them. Now, I ask, is it fair, or is it good policy, to refuse my hon. friend because he is a Nationalist those facilities which were freely given to the Member for the University of Dublin because he is a Unionist and an historian? Unfortunately it cannot be denied that these facilities have always been granted, so far as I know, to men who supported the Unionist Party, and have always been refused to Nationalists.

Vote agreed to.

5. £12,113, to complete the sum for Registrar General's Office, Ireland.

6. £7,071, to complete the sum for Valuation and Boundary Survey, Ireland.

SIR T. ESMONDE: I wish to ask what is the reason of the delay in the publication of the documents with reference to the survey of Ireland. Some of them were published in 1837, and I desire to know if it is on account of expense that the publication has not been continued. The material for the continuation of the series for the whole of Ireland has been collected, and the expense of carrying it out to a conclusion would be nothing like the initial expense which has been incurred. Several Irish county councils have already moved in this matter, and there is a general desire all over Ireland that some steps should be taken to publish these papers. I do not know whether the Government would see their way to starting the publication with a small grant, or, in the event of an Irish County Council bearing half the expense of the publication of the documents relating to its own county, would the Government be prepared to pay the other half?

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (MR. HANBURY, Preston): These Ordnance surveys are not Ordnance surveys in the strict sense of the word at all. In 1837 they were called “Memoirs,” and their publication was confined to a particular part of the country. They are on an entirely different footing from the Ordnance Survey, and, although I quite admit there is some-

thing to be said for their publication, it is an entirely new subject, as far as the Vote is concerned.

SIR T. ESMONDE : These "Memoirs" relate to the whole of Ireland, and the material for them has already been collected by very eminent men, and there is nothing to be done now except to publish them. I raised the question in the hope that the Government might see their way to help the County Councils in the matter.

***MR. FLYNN :** A great deal of interest is taken in the question which has been raised by the hon. Baronet. There is another point, however, which I should like to bring under the notice of the Treasury and the Irish Office. It is in regard to the complaints which are made as to the somewhat peculiar and unbusinesslike manner in which the Boundary Commissioners act with regard to revaluation. A short time ago, at Mill Street in my own constituency, a portion of the Great Southern and Western Railway Company's property was revalued and the local body complains of the extraordinary manner in which it was carried out. No intimation was given that the valuation was to be made, and the local authorities consider that it was a great injustice to the general body of the taxpayers that the valuation of a great portion of the land should be lowered, thereby of course increasing the amounts to be paid by the other taxpayers. It would appear that the revaluation should be the other way, because the property of the company has greatly increased in value, and the local authorities were greatly surprised to find that its valuation was reduced by £3,000 or £4,000. There was a somewhat similar case near Kilkenny, where the same procedure appears to have been followed. The Valuation Office gave no notice to the local authority, and the valuation of the property was decreased, thereby throwing a greater burden on the other ratepayers. Surveyors appear to have been sent down to revalue house and land property without any reference whatever to the locality or to the individual concerned. A case came under my own observation a short time ago, where a large merchant in Cork, having made certain alterations in his premises, found that his valuation was considerably

Mr. Hanbury.

increased without any notice, although he proved to the satisfaction of business men that the alteration in no way affected the value of the premises. The surveyors come down almost in the dark, nobody knows who they are or what they are doing, and probably the ratepayer does not know until he receives a demand from the rate office that his valuation has been increased. Under these circumstances, it is only fair to the locality and the individual concerned that some intimation should be given by the Valuation Office to parties interested as to the date the premises or other property would be inspected, and that the interested parties should meet the valuation commissioner and discuss the matter with him. I think that is a very fair request. Surely the Valuation Office owes something to the public by whom they are supported. They ought to transact their business in a courteous and business-like manner, and I hope the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury will make a note of the point.

MR. HANBURY : I will look into the matter.

SIR JAMES HASLETT (Belfast, N.): As far as valuation in Ireland is concerned, I think we ought to have an absolute change. I have a case before my mind which occurred within the last few days, in which certain premises were revalued. A shop window was put in, and the internal part of the shop was somewhat changed, and that gave rise to a fresh valuation. The old valuation was £115, and the new valuation was £450 on the same premises. I would also point out that our Ordnance Survey maps are exceedingly incomplete. So far as Belfast is concerned, we cannot get one complete Ordnance map of the city, and we have to patch it up in sections. I earnestly urge the right hon. Gentleman to give the matter some attention.

MR. DILLON : I wish to know why the six-inch maps in Ireland are not brought up to the same level as similar maps in England. I received a complaint within the last few days that the six-inch maps in Mayo are now being drawn up at such a rate that it will take forty or fifty years to complete the whole survey of the

county. Constant complaints on the matter have reached me from Ireland, and there is no sign of the Ordnance Survey coming to an end. What is required is not a diminished staff, but, on the contrary, a stronger staff, which will enable the work to be grappled with. The operations of the officials have been enormously increased, owing to the action of the Land Commission.

***THE CHAIRMAN:** The Ordnance maps are not included in this Vote. The question should be raised in Class 1, Vote 9.

Vote agreed to.

£24,739, to complete the Public Works Office, Ireland.

SIR T. ESMONDE: There are a number of items to which I should like to call the attention of the Financial Secretary. The first has reference to the rates charged by the Department for water-works and other loans. There is one loan from the Board of Works which presses rather heavily on a part of my constituency. That is the loan made to the Kerry Grand Jury for the construction of a pier at Fenit. The charge on that loan is £5 ls. per cent., which seems to me to be a very high rate of interest.

MR. HANBURY: Is that interest alone?

SIR T. ESMONDE: No; interest and repayment. But interest and repayment can be had much cheaper than that.

MR. HANBURY: Can the hon. Baronet say over what period the loan runs?

SIR T. ESMONDE: I cannot say that. The Kerry County Council passed a resolution calling the attention of the Commissioners of Public Works to the fact that the rate of interest and the sinking fund amounted to £5 ls. 10d. per cent., which they regard as very high, considering the large amount of capital borrowed for the Fenit Pier, and they desire to convert the balance of the loan into a new loan at 2½ per cent. I also wish to direct the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to the fact that the rates charged for advances for labourers' cottages are not the same in all counties. Wexford and

Kerry are two counties in point. I do not know what is the exact number of cottages in Kerry, but in Wexford there are 1,100, some of them built under the earlier Acts, the result being that Wexford has to pay more for them. I now come to a matter of great antiquarian interest which is under the control of the Board of Works. I allude to the preservation of ancient Irish monuments. I have taken a very great interest in this matter, and I have considerable knowledge of the condition of some of these ancient historical buildings in various parts of Ireland. I think the preservation of these monuments is very much to be desired. The Board of Works has, I understand, inspectors who see that the monuments are kept in proper repair. But to keep a very ancient church in proper repair is a matter requiring great discretion and wide discrimination, and it is not improbable that some of the inspectors are not as qualified for the task as they might be. If the Board of Works found that the local quack who was entrusted with the work was not discharging it satisfactorily it would be very easy for them to communicate with the local secretary of the Society of Antiquaries, or some similar society, and be advised by him. I wish to put a concrete case. There is an interesting old abbey in the island of Inniscitra, in Lough Derg. The structure is surrounded with bushes, ivy, weeds, and so forth, and the work of clearing them away ought to be done very carefully indeed, as otherwise it is quite possible that some of the stones may be removed. On that island there is also a very ancient burial ground known as the Saints' Yard. It is very antiquated, and there are a large number of monuments with Celtic inscriptions lying about. Not very long ago the remains of some person who had died in the neighbourhood were buried in the Saints' Yard, where nobody is supposed to be buried, and great local displeasure was manifested. I hope steps will be taken to prevent a similar invasion of this holy place in the future. One other point. It appears to me that some of the locks on the canal up to Limerick require looking after. One of them appears to be very much in need of repair. It also would appear to be desirable that these locks should be fitted with a short iron ladder to enable people

to get into the boats in safety, whereby the danger which now exists would be avoided. These are the only points I wish to raise on this Vote.

*MR. MICHAEL AUSTIN (Limerick, W.): I desire to call the attention of the Chief Secretary to a matter affecting the development of the tourist traffic on the Lower Shannon. About two years ago a steamer service commenced to run between Kilrush and Tarbert. I put a question then as to whether this service should not be extended to Glin and Foynes to meet the train coming from Limerick at mid-day, in order to have a through circular route to Tarbert, Lis-towel and Killarney, which would be much appreciated by tourists. It would also be of great advantage to the people of Glin, which is nine miles from Foynes, and has no means of communication except by road. There is a large industrial school in Glin, and I think it is of importance to the three Unions which support it that this service, which could be easily extended, should not be kept back on account of the slight additional expense attaching to it. On the 15th of July last year I put a question on the subject to the Chief Secretary at the instance of the Grand Jury, and the right hon. Gentleman then stated that the Government had no objection to the Kilrush and Tarbert steamers giving a service to Glin and Foynes, that they were most anxious to have this service put into operation, but that the railway and steamship companies must make their own arrangements. Then I put myself into communication with the Waterford and Limerick Steamboat Company, and to my amazement they stated in reply to my letter that, while anxious at all times to meet the public convenience as far as possible, they felt that in the present condition of the Glin pier it would not be safe for their steamers to call at it, as the ebb tide set on to the pier with such strength as would carry the steamer with great force upon it. Considering that the sum of £10,000 was expended on that pier, I thought it a rather serious reflection on the Board of Works in Ireland and the County surveyor; and I put myself in communication with the County surveyor, who said—

"I have no hesitation in giving you my opinion. The pier is quite suitable for the steamer traffic. I may add, a new land-

ing stage was erected to my satisfaction by an experienced firm of iron workers. You are correctly informed that some years ago a vessel called regularly there, although the old stage was then worn out and worm-eaten."

Further correspondence with the steamship company elicited no more satisfaction to myself, and I left the matter over until I put a question to the Chief Secretary on the subject. This year when a complaint was made, that the railway and steamship companies did not put a service on a certain route, the right hon. Gentleman answered me that the contract between the Commissioner of Public Works and the Waterford Steamship Company was limited to the transit between Tarbet and Kilrush, and that it would not be competent to ask that the steamers should call at Glin, as requested. To a supplementary question I put to him, as to whether the Board of Works would assist in promoting this service, the right hon. Gentleman said that we should have their good-will in the matter. We require more than good-will. The Chief Secretary will admit there is a great discrepancy between his answer last year, and that of a couple of weeks ago.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: What I said was that the contract between the Board of Works and the Steamship Company was for a service between Tarbet and Kilrush. They were perfectly agreeable that the service should be extended to Glin, but they had no power to compel that extension.

*MR. MICHAEL AUSTIN: The scenery from Tarbet to Glin and Foynes is splendid. At present the steamer lies at Tarbet for six hours, and it would only take an hour and a half to go from Tarbet to Glin and Foynes, and the same to return. It is principally on behalf of the great institution at Glin that I plead that this service shall be extended to Glin and Foynes.

MR. DILLON: I wish briefly to draw attention to a body of men who are under the administration of the Board of Work; that is the Glebe Loan borrowers of Ireland. The money advanced to them has been of considerable benefit to the clergy of the different denominations in Ireland. The Act under which these loans were granted

Sir T. Esmonde.

was passed in 1870 in redemption of a promise which was given by the then Chief Secretary, and by Mr. Gladstone in the course of the Debates on the Irish Church Act. Under the Irish Church Act the clergy of the disestablished Church were granted their glebes, which were valued at a million and a half, for the sum of £180,000. That concession was made in order to smooth the passage of the Church Act, and Mr. Gladstone gave a binding obligation to do something towards placing the clergy of other denominations on a footing approaching to equality with the clergy of the disestablished Church. The Glebes Loan Act, founded on that pledge, was applicable equally to the Catholic clergy, the Presbyterian clergy, and the clergy of other creeds. It has been very largely availed of and has worked very beneficially. My hon. friend the Member for Longford reminds me that the clergy of the disestablished Church had a right to avail themselves of the Act, although they had already got a concession to the value of over a million of money. Now, in the course of the speech in which Mr. Gladstone defended this concession, he pointed out that this was no special advantage conferred upon ministers of religion. The object of the Irish Church Act was to put an end to the religious establishment in Ireland. But another object was to establish the principle of religious equality, and to give all religious bodies a fair start. The principle laid down by Mr. Gladstone was to go as far in the way of advancing public money to ministers of religion who wished to purchase their glebes as it was possible to go without any loss to the Exchequer, and without putting a burden on the taxpayers. I dwell on that point because in reply to the demand which has been made by the Glebe Loan borrowers for some share of the relief recently given to other borrowers of money from the Exchequer, it was said that the principle in granting these reliefs was to draw a distinction between loans which are secured on public rates and loans secured on mortgages on private property. In justifying the denial of relief to the Glebe Loan borrowers, it was said that their loans belonged to the class secured on mortgages on private property, and that there was no collateral security based on rates. But I reply that the Glebe Loan borrowers stand in a totally different

position from other borrowers, whose loans are secured only on individual property. And why? Because the Glebe Loan Act was an Act brought in, not on all fours with other Acts sanctioning loans, but in redemption of a pledge made by Mr. Gladstone on the occasion of an alteration in public policy. These borrowers, therefore, are entitled to claim to be put in a position similar to borrowers under the Land Act, loans under which are made under very generous terms from a Treasury point of view. The principle on which Mr. Gladstone proceeded was to go as far as possible to help the clergy without involving any loss to the taxpayers of the country; but now owing to the great fall in the value of money, the interest fixed upon these loans is manifestly too high, and I think it can be shown that the Treasury is making a large profit on these loans, and therefore the borrowers are entitled to some consideration from the Treasury. In 1897 a very influential deputation waited upon the Chief Secretary in Dublin to represent the views of these glebe borrowers. I desire to emphasise the fact that this deputation was not confined to Catholics, but was largely composed of Protestant clergymen of various denominations. The Chief Secretary, in the course of the very interesting discussion which took place, admitted that the borrowers had, I will not say exactly a grievance, but a strong case, and that the terms on which their loans were granted did undoubtedly throw upon the incumbents who had built their houses an undue burden. It must be remembered that as regards the Catholic Church, as well as some of the Nonconformist bodies, we have had to cover our country with ecclesiastical buildings of all kinds—schools, churches, convents, mission-houses—on a scale which, I venture to say, has never been equalled in any country since the Middle Ages. And that has been done out of the pockets of our own people. Well, the Chief Secretary admitted that there was a strong case, but the Lords of the Treasury, to whom the matter was afterwards referred, argued that these loans were not entitled to the relief given, under the Local Loans Act of 1897, to other borrowers under the Board of Works in Ireland. The Glebe Loan borrowers are entitled to borrow to the extent of three-fourths of the value of their houses, and they pay 5 per cent. on that amount for thirty-five

years in redemption of principle and interest. That involves interest at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on the sum advanced. They say that that is very high interest at present, in view of the distinct understanding that they were not to be charged more interest than would save from loss and pay the cost of administration. They therefore ask that that interest of $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. should be reduced, or, as an alternative, that the same relief as is given by the Land Act of 1896 should be given them—namely, that outstanding balances shall be consolidated and issued as fresh loans with an extended period of repayment. I support these requests on three strong grounds, two of which I have already mentioned. First, Mr. Gladstone's promise; second, the vast expense to which these people have been put; and third, that the Act has been in force for thirty years and there has not been a penny of loss, and practically speaking there are no arrears, and there is no difficulty in recovering the money. It is also a service which, they contend, has given a large profit to the Treasury. On that point I think there is a difference of opinion, because the Treasury say that there has been no profit, and that the expense of administration is great. Of course it is very hard for me, not having all the documents at my disposal, to disprove that completely; but looking at the papers placed in my hands, I fancy there must be a profit, for I am assured that the only expense is, that for a surveyor to go down into the country to certify the work. I am assured there are no legal costs, which are paid by the borrowers, and that a considerable sum is charged against the service for the cost of administration. I do not think that we should deal with this as an exceptional case. No doubt there is a large amount of sentiment at the back of the case; but it is not a sectarian sentiment; it covers the whole population. It seems to me that the one strong argument the Government have for resisting the case is that it may lead to a number of others. On that I have a great deal of sympathy with the Secretary to the Treasury, who I know is open to assaults on all sides. But, still, I think the Government would do a popular thing at no cost if they would grant this concession.

Mr. Dillon.

MR. HANBURY: I think the hon. Gentleman is hardly correct in saying that the loans made under this Act are remunerative to the Treasury. In fact, I may almost put it that they involve a loss. Considering the number of loans, the expenditure connected with their administration is exceptionally large. The real point in this controversy is that the kind of collateral security required by the Act of the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the purpose of reducing the rate of interest on similar loans does not exist in this case, and it would be very dangerous indeed to make a new departure in this particular case. I admit that there are circumstances of some hardship suffered by the glebe borrowers, but we are bound by the Act as it stands, and if we were to alter not only the original Act, but the Act passed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer some years ago, we should be placing ourselves in a very dangerous position. It is, therefore, impossible, without risking the rate of interest which the Treasury is empowered to charge, to make an exception in this case.

* MR. HEMPHILL (Tyronne, N.): I do not wish to occupy the time of the Committee, but I should like to observe that there is hardly any question in which so large a class of Irish people are interested as in the present. It is quite true, as is admitted by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Treasury, that this is certainly not a sectarian question, nor is it a political one. We can, therefore, talk about it in cold blood. I am informed that the amount of money advanced for glebe lands in Ireland is £545,581, or thereabouts, and that has to be paid for by 1,302 borrowers. Therefore this is a very important question, as my right hon. friend will admit; and it has exercised the minds of those who are interested in the subject for some years. Undoubtedly the rate of interest, compared with the rate of interest charged on other Government advances, is very heavy. For what is it? It is 5 per cent.— $3\frac{1}{2}$ Government charge for interest, and $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. for the Sinking Fund—and the loans have to be repaid in thirty-five years. So that, in every way it was a very close and hard bargain in 1870, when the rate of interest was considerably higher than it is now. We know now that money has been advanced for various purposes at

3 per cent. and $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. under the Local Loans Act, which has been referred to by my right hon. friend, and which I admit does not apply to this particular case, because it applies only to charges which are secured by local rates, but the spirit of the Act applies. The completely unsectarian and unpolitical character of this question is shown by the deputation which waited on the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, in which every denomination was represented. Now, I would press the Government to reduce the rate of interest to a reasonable sum—not in such a way as to prejudice the security of the State—and to extend the time of repayment from thirty-five to fifty years, as has been done under some of the Land Purchase Acts. That would leave the security the same, but it would afford great relief to a very meritorious class.

MR. FLYNN *am* convinced that there can be no insuperable difficulty in consolidating the loans and re-issuing them at a lower rate of interest for an extended period. Surely, if a corporation can do that—and it has been done by the Corporation of Dublin—it is not beyond the power and the wit of the Treasury to do the same. The rates of interest are very much lower than when the sum was lent in 1870, and $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. is, therefore, an enormous rate to charge.

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN (Donegal, W.): I think it is abundantly evident that there is a grievance pressing upon a large and worthy class of Irish clergyman. They have been asking for relief time after time, and have made a good case, but the Treasury is pleased to turn a deaf ear to it. Now, Sir, the bargain is a hard one. Perhaps at the time it was made it was not unreasonable, but circumstances have considerably changed since then. How is the grievance met? We have heard a good deal lately about money-lenders. It seems to me that the spirit of the money-lender—the “gombeen man”—is very much in the heart of the Treasury. It has been stated, and stated very truly, that those who get the loans possess a special and peculiar characteristic which ought to be taken into consideration. The loans are absolutely safe, nothing has been lost, and nothing is ever likely to be lost. The borrowers are a class of men who are incapable of doing anything un-

fair or unjust in connection with their responsibility, and behind them are parishioners who will not see their clergymen put to inconvenience by their houses being sold and their furniture auctioned. It is therefore a safe transaction, and I think the Government might see their way to meet the case. In the first place, this could be accomplished by reducing the rate of interest—the Treasury are quite capable of arranging that if they thought fit to do so—and, in the next place, by prolonging the time of repayment. If those two measures were adopted great satisfaction would be given in Ireland, not only to the clergy and the different denominations, but to the people who sympathise with them.

MR. DILLON: I confess that I am greatly surprised that in making this claim we have received no support whatever from the representatives of the Protestant Party in Ireland. I have in my hand a report of the deputation which waited on the Chief Secretary in December, 1897, on behalf of the glebe land borrowers of Ireland, and I find among the gentlemen who formed that deputation representatives of all the great Church bodies in Ireland. And yet when we bring forward this grievance not one word of support for this most moderate claim comes from hon. Members from the North of Ireland, although we might naturally expect that support from them would have much greater influence with the Government than we can hope to exercise. Local loans should be financed directly out of the funds at the disposal of the Commissioners for the reduction of the National Debt, when the pressure on the market for Consols would, *pro tanto*, be relieved, and 30 or 40 millions in the hands of the Commissioners used as local loans stock earning more than could be got by redeeming the Debt in a perfectly safe and guaranteed security.

* MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): Some few years since I brought this question before the House of Commons and pressed it on the attention of the Government. Although at that time I failed to make an impression, I trust upon this occasion we are all as one as to the need of something being done by the Government to meet the pressing claims of the glebe loan borrowers. There is no

sectarianism or politics in the question, and I hope that the Government will take action in the matter. It seems to me that this is very much a question for Treasury experts. Why not advance to these glebe loan borrowers a sufficient amount of money to discharge the existing liability from some other imperial source? At the present moment the Local Loans Fund Commissioners are advancing money at the rate of a quarter of a million a month at $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. This is the money they are getting from the Post Office Savings Bank and cannot find an opportunity to invest. If the amount of the glebe loan borrowers was paid off and an amount sufficient to enable them to pay them off was advanced to them it might be very easily settled. I think the Treasury might look into this matter and consider whether some relief could not be given in that way so that they might benefit by paying lower interest.

MR. WILLIAM MOORE (Antrim, N.): Had I known that this question was coming on to-day, or known that anyone in my constituency was interested in the matter, I should have done my best to bring the matter forward. When we are challenged I think we ought to explain our silence. I do not, however, say that in any unfriendly way, and I shall be glad to see the hon. Member for East Mayo carry this matter through.

MR. DAVITT: Before this Vote is taken I should like to have some explanation with regard to one item. I find £50 is to be voted for an inspector whose duty it is to inspect ancient monuments and ruins in Ireland. I should like to know who the gentleman is, and what the work is for which he is to get this paltry amount. I do not dispute the amount in the vote, but would rather it be increased. I find in a footnote that a further sum of £200 is given for inspecting national monuments; which money is provided under the Irish Church Acts. I have tried to find some particulars of that £200, but have failed. But I contend that, having regard to the large number of ancient monuments we have in Ireland, a larger sum than £250 ought to be allowed to insure that those monuments should not be allowed to fall into decay. I should like to see some prominent archæological expert appointed for this work, and if such an individual were

appointed, Irish Members on both sides of the House would not object to his being paid a fair sum for the duties which he has to perform. I find that while the inspection of ancient monuments only costs £300, here under this Vote the total salaries for the Board of Works amount to £2,700, and I see that the charwomen employed in cleaning out the offices get more than half the money paid for the inspection of the national ancient monuments in Ireland. I should like the right hon. Gentleman to look into this matter; he may not be so familiar with the ancient monuments and ruins as we are, but if he travelled through the country and saw them he would sympathise with the claim we make, and I trust between this and next year he will make some increase on that account.

SIR T. ESMONDE: I beg to support what has fallen from my hon. friend. We have no fault to find with this gentleman, who is doing this duty, but I think a little more money should be granted for this valuable service. Irishmen take very great interest in this matter, and session after session we bring it forward without any appreciable result; but I hope we shall see some result on this occasion, and that a larger sum of money will be allowed for this purpose.

*MR. HEMPHILL: Before this Vote is passed I should like to call attention to a matter which is both unpolitical and unsectarian in its complex. There is attached to the Four Courts in Dublin a very valuable and important library frequented by the Irish lawyers, and through the lawyers the Irish public would be great sufferers by its decay. The Royal Courts of Justice in London, here, also have a library for the benefit of the Bar, and the right hon. Gentleman will hear with surprise that while lighting, firing, furnishing, and cleaning of the library at the Royal Courts of Justice, England, is paid out of the public funds, there is no similar contribution made to the library at the Four Courts, Dublin. I bring this matter forward at the instance of what is called the Bar Council of Ireland, the secretary of which has had a great deal of correspondence with the Dublin Board of Works on the subject; and what I wish to ask is, that a sum should be given to cover the items

Mr. William Johnston.

I have mentioned. The structure of the library is maintained by the Board of Works, because it is part of a public building, and the sum we now ask for is not large, £200 or £300 would cover it all. Mr. Stephenson, of the Board of Works, tried to draw a distinction between this library and that of the Royal Courts, London, but there is nothing in the distinction, as it was based upon a want of knowledge of what the conditions under which the library existed were. He assumed, because members of the Irish Bar for the most part live at home and transact their business in their own studies, and not in chambers like the Temple, that the library was a sort of chambers and club rolled into one; but that is not the case, and there is no reason why the English Bar should have this contribution made to the expense of their library, and the Irish Bar, which is a much poorer body of men, should have to pay it themselves. The robing room fees is another matter to which I wish to call attention. In the Royal Courts, England, the annual subscription is £1 1s., with a fee of 5s. for the convenience of a peg, and so on. In Ireland, Queen's Counsel have to pay £4 4s., and Junior Counsel £2 2s. The Committee, if I am right, will say, I hope, that this act of justice shall be done. We ask no more, and shall not be content with less.

MR. WILLIAM MOORE: I also have been asked by the Council of the Bar to bring this matter before the House. I can prove my case very shortly. We wish to be put on the same footing as the library of the Royal Courts. We have about 400 members, at an annual subscription of £2 2s., which results in 800 guineas a year, out of which we have to provide everything, and consequently there is not much left for buying books. The robing room of the Royal Courts in the Strand, again, has a small subsidy, but we in Ireland have to pay for our own robing rooms. I sincerely trust that the Secretary to the Board of Works will see that these grievances are removed.

MR. DAVITT: I opposed this proposal last year on general principles. I agree with the saying which is attributed to Peter the Great, that one lawyer is enough for one country. I admit that if that were so, my right hon. friend who sits on the front Opposition Bench would

come first. However, as he has acted very kindly in supporting us to-night, I do not intend to oppose his proposal this year.

Vote agreed to.

CLASS IV.

8. £21,724, to complete the sum for Scientific Investigation, etc.

SIR T. ESMONDE: I think, as the First Lord of the Treasury is in his place, and he has taken great interest in the case of the Irish gold ornaments, I would like to ask him if he is in a position to give us any information as to how the case stands.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): In answer to the hon. Baronet, I have to say that two or three questions that have arisen have been referred to the law officers of both countries, but I think that probably not much time will elapse before I am able to give the hon. Baronet and other Gentlemen who are greatly and properly interested in the question some answer which will show them how the matter stands and what the legal difficulties are that will have to be dealt with.

SIR T. ESMONDE: That being so, I thank the right hon. Gentleman, and am content to leave the matter in his hands.

Vote agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported:—

CLASS II.

Motion made, and question proposed—

“That a sum, not exceeding £27,479, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on 31st day of March, 1900, for the salaries and expenses of the Local Government Board in Ireland.”

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN: I rise to move the motion standing in my name, and I desire to draw attention to the fact that certain action taken by the Local Government Board has resulted in putting a great financial burden on the Glenties Union in the county Donegal, and I wish to ask whether a remedy cannot be found

by the right hon. Gentleman. I shall state the case very briefly. In January, 1898, in the Glenties Poor Law Union there arose some cases of virulent typhus fever. A family of the name of Ward, a man, his wife, and thirteen children, were stricken by the disease, and the wife died in the little cabin. The medical officer saw that it was essential to the lives of the rest of the family that they should be removed from the cabin, and brought to the Glenties Poor Law Hospital. That was effected, and the doctor then wrote a letter to the guardians advising them that for the safety of the whole district the thatch and furniture of the cabin from which they had been removed should be burnt. He declared and certified that there was no other way of disinfecting it than by burning it. This advice the guardians followed, and they burnt the furniture and the thatch of that particular cabin and another one in the same condition. When the persons whose lives had been saved by the action of the Glenties Guardians were convalescent, the question was asked where they were to go to, and it was suggested that two cottages should be built for them under the Labourers Housing Acts. The guardians having looked into the question saw great difficulty in complying with that suggestion, but they had the good sense to agree to pay some compensation. This poor man Ward was perfectly willing to accept the compensation from the guardians to the amount of £20, and he had gone to a neighbouring town or village and was actually engaged in buying the wood to set up a roof to his cabin, when the Local Government Board declared that any money voted for the purposes proposed would be illegal, and the guardians would be liable to be surcharged. Under these circumstances the guardians went no further with the matter. There was the alternative of building two labourers' cottages, but the Glenties Union is a poor union, with a debt of about £1,200, and rates amounting to 8s. 6d. in the £1, and as these buildings would cost about £200 the guardians felt unable to incur the expenditure. They were also informed that the families would have to be charged a rent for these new cottages. "Why," said the guardians, "should these people be charged this rent? They did no wrong; they are the victims of a great

Mr. T. D. Sullivan.

calamity, and they are entitled to be rehoused without being charged an additional rent." So for a time nothing more was done. Then the two families were legally advised that they had good cause of action against the board of guardians for the demolition of their houses. Actions were brought, and damages to the amount of £150 were awarded in each case. The damages and costs have landed the Glenties Board of Guardians into a liability of about £500, which the union is absolutely unable to pay. Judge Murphy, who tried one of the cases in Dublin, in addressing the jury reminded them that in awarding compensation they should not forget that the lives of the plaintiff's family were probably saved by the action of the guardians; while the judge who tried the other case said he was sure the gentlemen in the box would be obliged to the guardians for what they had done in destroying this den of filth; it was a mercy to the people themselves, and the doctor had said that the only way of getting rid of the germs of the disease was by burning the house. It is therefore perfectly evident that the guardians acted not simply according to their lights, but according to what they conceived to be their absolute duty in the matter. No doubt the burning of the houses was an illegal act, but the whole thing has turned out in such a way, and has brought about such hardship and burden upon the ratepayers of that union, that I think they are entitled to some consideration from the Local Government Board—that is to say, from the Government. I hold in my hands a letter which has caused me some astonishment, and which contains a statement of a fact of which I was utterly unaware, and of which I rather think the Board of Guardians had no knowledge. If that is so, I think the Local Government Board are much to blame for not having informed the guardians of the fact. The letter, which is from the Chief Secretary, states:

"The expense of building the cottages would no doubt have been £200, as the guardians point out, but it has to be borne in mind that of this sum £179 would have been defrayed out of the Labourers' Cottages Grant by the Government."

The letter concludes by stating that the Chief Secretary cannot give any hopes of the Chancellor of the Exchequer providing for the expenditure of £500 out of public

funds. We see the Chancellor of the Exchequer here night after night absolutely sporting enormous amounts of money. Recently millions have been voted, and the heads of some Irish Members have been made dizzy by the prodigious amounts which are so lightly treated, and under the circumstances I do not think it would hurt the British Exchequer or call forth any protests from the Members of the House if the Treasury agreed to relieve the Glenties Board of Guardians of this unfortunate burden.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: The facts of the case are these. There was a case of typhus fever in the Glenties Union, and the sanitary authorities were advised that the proper and only way of disinfecting the houses was to burn them. Burnt they accordingly were by the Guardians, who then proposed to spend £40 or thereabouts in compensating the owners. The Local Government Board were asked to sanction the expenditure, but replied that it was not in their power to do so, that it was an illegal payment, for which, if made, those who signed the cheque would probably be surcharged. As the action of the Board was simply to safeguard the Guardians against having to pay the money themselves, it is hardly fair to say that the Guardians were landed in this expenditure by the action of the Local Government Board. Seeing the difficult position of the Guardians, the Board advised them that they might build cottages under the Labourers' Acts, and they sent down an inspector to recommend them to adopt that course. I understand that the Guardians were fully aware of the fact that if they adopted the proposal they would be entitled to £179 out of the Labourers' Cottages Grant, but they were not inclined to accept the suggestion. As to being forced to charge the families a rent, I cannot regard it as a very serious burden that a labourer should pay a small rent for a new cottage. The owners of the cottages which were burnt brought actions at law against the guardians, and damages were awarded to the amount of £150 in each case. The Guardians, not content with the decisions, appealed and again lost, the expenditure ultimately amounting to £500. Then the Guardians come to the Local Government Board, and ask the Board to be good enough to help them. But, in the first place, the Local Govern-

ment Board have no funds out of which this money could be granted. The only way in which the Guardians could be recouped would be by a Vote in this House, but having regard to the circumstances of the case I do not think the Chancellor of the Exchequer would accede to that. The circumstances of this case are undoubtedly hard, but it would be impossible every time guardians made a series of mistakes that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should take into consideration the question of reimbursing the expenditure thus incurred.

MR. MURNAGHAN (Tyrone, Mid): I desire to call the attention of the Committee to the action of the Local Government Board with regard to interference in the management of local affairs. Instead of assisting the new bodies which have been created under the recent Local Government Act, many members of which bodies are not experienced in matters of local government, the Local Government Board raise a series of barriers against those local bodies of carrying out their duties by making demands which have not hitherto been made. In a union with which I am connected, there was a vacancy for an assistant in one of the wards. The person required was a sort of domestic, to look after the cleaning, washing, scrubbing, and the rough work of the ward, at a salary of £15 or £20 a year. The guardians advertised the post, but upon applying for the appointment to be sanctioned they were informed that the Local Government Board could not give their sanction, as the person had not the necessary qualifications. If boards of guardians are to have to ask for the sanction of such appointments as that, is it not turning the whole thing into a farce? The requirements of the Local Government Board are making it really impossible for any man who has any regard for his own dignity to go upon these bodies and merely register the views of a body which knows nothing whatever of the local wants or needs. What business has a body of salaried officials, who know nothing of the local requirements, to say to men who give their time without remuneration, and are the best selected men that can be found in the various districts, that they cannot sanction these appointments, but this or that must be done? I think the proper thing

is not to pay any attention to these objections, but to allow the matter to go for a month or so, by which time the Local Government Board have forgotten all about the incident, and the thing is then sanctioned and nothing more is done about it. But I am earnestly anxious that local government in Ireland should have a fair chance, and it is only right that I should protest against this meddling interference, for it is nothing else, on the part of the Local Government Board. If local bodies are going to be entrusted with the management of their local affairs they should not be interfered with in this way. If they are fit to pay these officials they are fit to appoint them. Since the system of local government has been changed the interference from Dublin has increased.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR was understood to dissent.

MR. MURNAGHAN: The right hon. Gentleman says "no," but I am chairman of the Board and of the District Council, and it is no use for the right hon. Gentleman to say "no," because I have my own experience. Unless these local bodies commit some gross error why should they be interfered with at all in this manner? It seems to me that within the last few months a different spirit has come over this body, for there has been nothing but confusion and meddling interference on the part of the Local Government Board. I say that it is not right to try and hamper these local bodies, and they should be allowed to have proper freedom. The local bodies feel that the responsibility rests upon them, and they ought to have the freedom and liberty to do what they think is right. There seems to be a desire on the part of the Local Government Board to create expense, so that the new bodies will become unpopular with the people, for they are doing all they possibly can to thwart the growth of local government in Ireland and impede local work. One of the local boards took counsel's opinion upon an order of the Local Government Board, and they were told that it was *ultra vires*. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will be able to translate that into Anglo-Saxon. The Local Government Board seem to be moved by a desire to impede the beneficial results which were expected to flow from the Local Government Act; and I think

Mr. Murnaghan.

the wings of that body will have to be clipped, and I shall make an effort to do it. As a representative of the people, I object to the will of the people being thwarted in this way. The right hon. Gentleman opposite is lord and master of the Irish people. His will is paramount, the Local Government Board is the central authority, and the elected bodies are mere trifles. As one who believes that from the people all power is derived, and that the people themselves are the best authority to control the affairs of the country, I protest against the methods of interference adopted by the Local Government Board.

*MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON: I do not think I need offer any apology to the Committee for bringing forward the case of Miss Magill, who was appointed rate-collector by the Clogher Board of Guardians last year. The matter has been brought under the notice of the Chief Secretary by questions in the House, and his attention has also been directed to it in other ways. It will be in the recollection of hon. Members that in May, 1898, Thomas Magill, who had filled the position of rate-collector in the Clogher Union for a considerable number of years, died, and that his daughter, Miss Ann Eliza Magill, who had discharged the duties for five years during her father's lifetime, was appointed to succeed him on the 11th of June, 1898. This lady had effectively and efficiently discharged the duties during the last five years her father held the office. There was no difficulty in the matter of disbursement, and there was a sort of an agreement on the part of the ratepayers to pay their rates when called upon to do so by this lady. One would have imagined that the Local Government Board would, on this occasion, have sanctioned the action of the Board of Guardians, unless they are distinctly and particularly hostile to the employment of women in any capacity whatever. But I regret to have to recall to the committee that an order was issued by the Local Government Board on the 22nd of July, 1898, directing that Miss Magill should not exercise any of the powers or perform any of the duties of the office to which she had been appointed. This course of action astonished the Guardians and disgusted the country. Irish newspapers of all shades of opinion were for once in agree-

ment in condemning it, and no hostile voice came from any portion of the country. On the 2nd of August I had the honour of presenting a petition to the House from the Clogher Board of Guardians praying the House to make an inquiry and to provide a remedy. In pursuance of that petition, and in accordance with its prayer, I now ask this Committee to cause such an inquiry to be made as will place Miss Magill in the position that the Clogher Board of Guardians desired she should occupy, and the duties of which she had faithfully discharged for five years. But the Local Government Board did not approve of the action of the Clogher Board of Guardians, and they took what I think was the rather high-handed course of dissolving the Board and appointing two paid Guardians to discharge their duties. The Irish press was unanimous in support of the Clogher Board of Guardians, and condemned the action of the Local Government Board. On the 20th of October, 1898, the Dungannon Board of Guardians passed a resolution requesting the Local Government Board to reconsider the case. But the answer which was given was in accordance with the whole course of action taken by the Board. I think lawyers will bear me out when I state that the Petty Sessions Act 14 and 15 Vic. Chapter 93, which deals with the enforcement of the payments of poor rate, county rate, and other public taxes, does not require that the rate collector should distrain in person or that the warrant should be directed to the rate collector specially. The whole question came before the full Court of Exchequer, and the unanimous judgment of the Court delivered by the Chief Baron was that the 152nd Section of 6 and 7 William IV., which directs that the warrant shall issue to the collector of county cess, is inconsistent with the Petty Sessions Act and had been repealed by it. Therefore the decision of the Local Government Board was not founded on law, and this House is entitled to revise it. I may mention that the whole question has been dealt with amply from first to last in two extremely interesting articles in the *Westminster Review*, one in September, 1898, the other in February, 1899. The Women's Local Government Society, of which the Countess of Aberdeen is president, brought this matter under the notice of counsel, and counsel's opinion

was adverse to the Local Government Board, and sustained the view that there was neither legal nor moral right to discharge this lady. I have also the same counsel's opinion with regard to the General Order which has been issued regulating the qualification, security, remuneration, and duties of the collectors of poor rate. Article 8 of this Order disqualifies a woman from acting as a collector, and Mr. Macinerney, the counsel consulted, was asked:

"Is it within the power of the Board to impose a disability on all women without the sanction of Parliament?"

Counsel's reply was:

"I am of opinion that it is not within the power of the Local Government Board (Ireland) to impose a disability on women nor on any other class of Her Majesty's subjects without the sanction of Parliament. The power of making regulations, orders, or byelaws given to subordinate bodies or boards are limited by the Acts conferring such powers. They should operate as part of the Acts. If inconsistent with the Acts by the authority of which they are framed they are clearly *ultra vires*."

The next question submitted to counsel was:

"Is such power conferred by any of the Acts referred to on page 1 of the General Order?"

The reply was:

"The power to make general orders and regulations was conferred on the predecessors in office of the Local Government Board (Ireland) by the Act referred to in the General Order in question—namely, the Poor Law Act of 1838. It provides that words imputing the masculine gender shall include females. Neither this Act nor any other of the numerous Acts in relation to Poor Relief in Ireland confers on the Local Government Board any power such as is suggested in queries one and two."

The third question was:

"Is the General Order a general rule that needs to be submitted to Parliament before becoming valid?"

The reply was:

"The Act of 1838, Section 4, provides that all general rules (which would include orders) should be sent by this body to the Secretary of State, and that if Her Majesty should with the advice of her Privy Council disallow such order or any part of it the same should cease to operate. The 10th and 11th Vic., Chap. 90, substituted the Lord Lieutenant in Council for the Secretary of State and Privy Council, but in my opinion the mandatory direction that all such orders should be laid before both Houses of Parliament (Sec. 5) still remains,

The order would be valid if duly sanctioned or if not disallowed until determined otherwise by a court of competent jurisdiction."

The next question was :

"How can it be ascertained (if the necessity exists) that such General Order has been so submitted?"

Counsel replied :

"A record of all orders submitted to Parliament is kept by the Librarian, and can be examined by any Member of Parliament."

The conclusion of the whole of Mr. Macinerney's reply, which is dated 2nd June, 1899, is as follows :

"I am very clearly of opinion that this matter should be raised and discussed in Parliament either on the estimates or by a question. The fact that the Local Government Board resorted to the expedient of making this Order is very good evidence that they were at least doubtful of their action in the case of Miss Magill."

Sir, I claim the right to raise this matter before this Committee of the House of Commons. I feel that an injustice has been done, not only to Miss Magill individually, but to the whole of that large class who would be excluded from public appointments if this decision were to pass unchallenged, and I confidently appeal to this Committee to bring its influence to bear on Her Majesty's Government, and to express without distinction of party a unanimous opinion that the action of the Local Government Board was harsh on Miss Magill and unjust to women generally.

MR. DAVITT: Hon. Members on this side of the House do not often find themselves in agreement with the hon. Member for South Belfast, but on this occasion we are heartily with him in his efforts to have a rational course adopted with reference to this lady. I will take the liberty of congratulating him on the splendid consistency he has shown in bringing this question again and again before the House of Commons since the Local Government Board, under the inspiration of the Chief Secretary, committed this stupid blunder. I venture to say that this strong conjunction of Members, Unionists and Nationalists, advocating a cause of this kind, ought to be a strong argument with the Chief Secretary. In my opinion the Chief Secretary has committed a double blunder. First, he has either sanctioned the arbitrary action of

the Local Government Board or prompted the Board to take that action, and, secondly, he seems to have failed to imbibe, although he is long enough in the country, some of the sentiment of Irishmen with reference to the other sex. He ought to know that Irishmen regard the other sex with the greatest possible esteem and courtesy. In no other country in the world are women more honoured and respected than in Ireland, and, surely, if the right hon. Gentleman wished for a non-party question on which to make some stand in this House for unanimous public feeling in Ireland, here was an occasion where he could have upheld the action of the Clogher Board of Guardians, inasmuch as that action met with the approval of all parties and the sanction of the country. We have been proud as Irishmen to find Ireland leading the way in this cause of women's enfranchisement as she has led the way in my opinion in every progressive movement for the last fifty years. We have been glad to give a lesson to England with reference to the right of women to be employed in public offices of this kind. In this case where was the wrong? The lady appointed was well known and I believe belongs to a highly respectable family; she was well qualified for the work by education and in other respects, and had the confidence of those who placed her in the position. It is not contended, I presume, by the Chief Secretary that the collection of rates in this particular union would have suffered at the hands of this lady. Why could not the right hon. Gentleman recognise the act of the Board of Guardians as evidence of the growth of feeling in both countries, particularly in Ireland, in favour of women being employed in work of this kind? The right hon. Gentleman smiles at my suggestion, but I hope I am right in claiming him as an advocate for women's suffrage. The First Lord of the Treasury is, anyhow, and I hope the Chief Secretary is also. Let us look at the question in this light. Women in Ireland have to pay rates and are taxed like men, and when a case of this kind occurs in which a local body sees fit to elect a woman to collect the rates, why cannot the right hon. Gentleman see his way to sanction that action? Surely the pillars of the British constitution would not fall if this lady were employed to collect the poor rates in the Clogher Union in the North of Ireland.

Mr. William Johnston.

We protest against the action of the right hon. Gentleman in boycotting this lady and also the Clogher Board of Guardians for having appointed her. I contend that the treatment to which this lady has been subjected on the authority and by the sanction of the Chief Secretary is absolutely disgraceful, and I trust that the right hon. Gentleman, after the expression of feeling from all parts of Ireland as represented by Irish Members here to-night, will see his way to reconsider his action. During this week we have had a Women's Congress assembling here in London, and when I consider the stupid laws passed for Ireland in the present generation by this House, I regretted during the week that we could not all clear out and allow ladies to come in here and try their hand at law-making. For my part I am satisfied that Ireland would benefit by this change of law-makers. Let me appeal to the right hon. Gentleman as to whether this is not a small matter in which to exercise his authority against the wishes of all parties in Ireland. Surely in view of the unanimous feeling throughout the country in favour of this lady being allowed to occupy this position he will see in that fact alone an overwhelming reason why he should give way on this point.

MR. DILLON: There are a great many subjects connected with the Vote to which I desire to refer. However it may be more convenient to deal with this particular subject before proceeding to the general discussion of the Vote. For my part I desire to add my voice to the appeal made by the hon. Member for South Belfast. To my mind there are two aspects to the question which has been raised. First of all there is the aspect as to whether a woman ought to be allowed to be a rate collector in a union. I think every member of the Committee will agree that unless it can be shown that there is some manifest disqualification it is desirable that the sphere of women's operations should be extended. Therefore I say it is for the Irish Government to prove that a woman is unqualified and unfitted because she is a woman to collect rates. That is a proposition which I confess I cannot understand how anyone can maintain. In Ireland a great many women are in business, and in many country towns women are able to compete, and successfully compete, with

men in running business establishments. If a woman is able to employ a number of men and to compete with men in the ordinary commerce of the country, why is a woman not fitted to collect the rates? There is absolute unanimity with reference to this particular case we are discussing. Miss Magill's father had been rate collector for several years, and during the five years before he died, and during which he was a hopeless invalid, Miss Magill collected the rates, and there was no complaint. With the full knowledge of the guardians she did the work satisfactorily; and when her father died the guardians, animated by a most proper spirit, continued her in the position. As I have stated, there are two aspects to this question. The first is whether a woman is qualified for this position, and, from the point of view of this particular case, Miss Magill had had the opportunity of proving her capacity, apart altogether from the general view that, as I think, no disqualification of this kind ought to exist. There is a second aspect to the question, which illustrates the power exercised by the Local Government Board in Ireland under the original Poor Law Act of Ireland, a power which is not claimed by the Local Government Board in England. We have again and again complained of the manner in which the Local Government Board tyrannises over the people in Ireland. I was very much struck the other day by the reply given by the President of the Local Government Board, when he was asked what he would do if a board of guardians refused to carry out an order which he had issued with reference to vaccination. I noticed that the right hon. Gentleman fenced with the question, which he regarded as rather unpleasant; but he admitted that the only course open to him was simply a legal process, such as imprisoning the whole board of guardians, which is not likely to be resorted to in this country. I almost ventured to get up and say, "Why not introduce the drastic system which obtains in Ireland." Under that system any board of guardians that does not obey the order of the Local Government Board is simply kicked out, and two gentlemen are sent down from Dublin as a blister on the district, and draw £500 a year between them. It is a monstrous system, destructive of all local liberty. It leads the Local Government Board into

habits of tyranny which they would not resort to if they had not the means of enforcing their authority. Of course, I am not referring to a question of accounts, in which they ought to have authority. In this country the Local Government Board have to have recourse to a very serious procedure, but in Ireland the machinery at the disposal of the Local Government Board is simple, steady, and effective, and they are accordingly tempted to have recourse to it on absolutely insufficient grounds. For a great many years boards of guardians have been suppressed in the south of Ireland, and no notice was taken of it, but the peculiar feature of the case of the Clogher Guardians is that it is the first time that the Local Government Board has come into conflict with a Board of Guardians in the loyal North—in the sacred province of Ulster. I sympathise with the Clogher Board of Guardians. They did a very proper thing, and instead of being allowed to try a most admirable experiment they were suppressed by the Local Government Board. One result of that has been to produce absolute unanimity among the Irish Members, a most unusual spectacle, and one which must be gratifying to everyone except the Chief Secretary. Not one single hon. Member from Ireland will get up and support the Local Government Board, or endeavour to justify its action, excluding, of course, the Members of the Government. This general order was issued in 1899, and that brings me to a matter on which I shall have something to say later on. There has been nothing to equal the number of orders in council, general orders, rules, and rules of Court which has been issued in connection with the Local Government Act. To use an American expression the new bodies have been "snowed under" by them. I have appealed to the Chief Secretary to have them collected into one volume, but that has not been done, and the result is that no one in Ireland knows what the law is. You might innocently imagine that when you have mastered the statute you know the law, but then you find it is lost in a multiplicity of orders. New orders, rules, and regulations are issued every month, and are afterwards withdrawn or altered and then cannot be found anywhere.

Mr. Dillon.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: I am not aware that a single order has been withdrawn.

MR. DILLON: That seems to me to be harping on a word. If they are not withdrawn they are altered and modified.

*MR. HEMPHILL: My recollection is that an order fixing the time of the elections was withdrawn.

MR. DILLON: I am only stating complaints which have reached me from local bodies which have been puzzled by these orders. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will give us these orders and regulations in one volume, so that by studying it we can understand what the law is. That is the least we are entitled to. I also hold that these orders should be issued to Irish Members as Parliamentary Papers. It is too much of a good thing to expect us to be hunting over Thom's in Dublin for them. We cannot keep track of them, as they are very complicated. In the general order which has been referred to in connection with the case of Miss Magill, various qualifications are laid down as being required for a poor rate collector. A man must not have been in receipt of relief, or must not be in the retail trade, or have been recently convicted either by indictment or summarily of any crime for which he was sentenced to hard labour. This last condition is what I will protest against on every occasion I can. It places it in the power of removable magistrates in Ireland not only to imprison a man for his politics, but to deprive him of his bread by disqualifying him for a position under these local bodies. That is a monstrous thing. Parliament, and Parliament alone, ought to lay down such a condition as that. It is outrageous that the Local Government Board composed of two or three servants of the right hon. Gentleman, should arrogate to itself the power of adding this further punishment to the punishment given by the removable magistrates to the political opponents of the Government. I think these questions of disqualification ought to be settled by Parliament, and not left to the Local Government Board. Under this rule, a man holding a meeting of the United Irish League might be disqualified from getting a position under these local bodies. Again, I find that the same disqualifica-

tion which attaches to a man sentenced to hard labour is also laid upon a woman because she is a woman. I say the Local Government Board have overstepped the bounds of reason and common sense in arrogating to themselves powers which ought to be kept in the hands of Parliament. It should not be within the power of anybody except Parliament to disqualify women as women. The question is one which turns parties upside down, and leads to very curious results, as we have recently seen in this House. It therefore seems to me that to relegate a question which so interests the electorate and divides parties to the decision of a man who by the mere stroke of his pen has the power to disqualify all the women rate collectors is a monstrous policy.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston): The question of the appointment of this woman to the office of rate-collector is one which appeals to me on more grounds than one. In the first place the occurrence came about at a time when we were discussing in this House the question of extending to Ireland the powers of local self-government which we enjoy in this country. Cases have come under my own observation in which women have been appointed, under almost identical circumstances, by local boards of guardians to perform duties even more important than those of collecting rates. I recollect one particular instance in which a woman, through the illness of her father, had been employed in the very difficult, and one would think for a woman almost impossible duty, of relieving officer of a rural district. In that case the Local Government Board in England, guided by the fact that this woman had performed these duties satisfactorily for a considerable period, recognised the right of the local authority to nominate such a person for the office. In England, in the administration of the Local Government Acts, the whole spirit of the Local Government Board has always been as far as possible to meet the wishes of the local governing bodies, because they recognise that these people understand the local conditions better than any central authority can understand them, and therefore by the Local Government Board, in that particular instance, a conciliatory attitude was adopted, and the action of the local authority supported. Such a decision

gave a certain amount of dissatisfaction in the locality, but if it had ended in the election of a large number of women to those offices, I do not think any serious injury would have been done. It was contended at the time that the post of relieving officer was a very disagreeable and onerous one for a woman to undertake; but when one recollects that a large number of the persons who come under the Poor Law are women and children, it seems to me that this is one of the opportunities for women to perform useful work. In this case you have a woman in almost identical circumstances who has been performing the duties of rate-collector of the district, and, in the illness of her father, performing them so satisfactorily that the local authority was willing to appoint her to the office; but the comparatively irresponsible Local Government Board in Dublin refused to recognise the appointment. They seem to me to have exercised their powers in an ungenerous fashion, if not arbitrarily and unwisely, because at that very time you were passing through this House a Bill to extend the local privileges of the Irish people. Under these circumstances I say it was more than want of foresight—it was a blunder on the part of the central authority in Dublin. When you give the Irish people local government you ought to give them a certain amount of freedom of action, and not tie them up with red-tape centralisation, so as to prevent them exercising their functions in the ordinary liberal manner. I felt myself that this action augured ill for the success of the Local Government Act, and therefore I regretted it; but I regret still more that after this new Act has become law the same narrow spirit of officialism and the same desire for central arbitrary authority still exists; and that it should be represented by the Order which has been quoted by my hon. friend behind me. I think that Order was a blunder on the part of the officials of Dublin Castle. It probably escaped the attention of the right hon. Gentleman opposite who is responsible for the government of Ireland, for I cannot conceive that he deliberately sanctioned a set of regulations excluding from office women who are capable of performing the duties connected with it, not only honourably to themselves, but to the benefit of the community. I hope, now that both sides of the House of Commons have shown their feelings in this matter,

the right hon. Gentleman will modify the regulations in a way which will recognise local feeling and local prejudices so as to bring about a more general confidence in the administration of affairs throughout the country. In that spirit the right hon. Gentleman will do much good to Ireland, both in a material as well as in a moral sense. I therefore hope that he will intimate to-night that this Order will, at all events, be modified, and that Poor Law offices, such as those of rate collector, will not be debarred to women who are fit and suitable to perform the functions.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: The right hon. Gentleman who has just spoken has suggested that the action taken by the Local Government Board was taken without my knowledge and consent. I beg to say at the outset that that is not the case. This matter was submitted to my consideration by my colleagues during June or July of last year. It was most carefully and exhaustively considered by me, and the conclusion I arrived at was that it was not desirable that women should hold these posts. That conclusion I have since embodied in the Order referred to by the hon. Member for East Mayo. The hon. Member for East Mayo, as well as the hon. Gentleman who has just spoken, appear to be unaware that so far as concerns the qualifications or disqualifications of rate collectors this Order is in all respects the reproduction of an Order which has been in force for a great number of years. The particular clause to which the hon. Member for East Mayo objects has, I believe I am right in saying, been included in Orders respecting the appointment of collectors since the Order was first issued, and I cannot conceive what objection there can possibly be to a clause of that sort. The hon. Member for East Mayo says that there should be no disqualification of that kind inserted in an Order of the Local Government Board unless it has the direct and explicit sanction of Parliament. Sir, the hon. Member appears to entirely forget that Parliament has placed the power in the discretion of the Local Government Board to approve or disapprove the appointment of any rate collector. In the first place Miss Magill had no right whatever to act as the deputy of her father. In doing so she was contravening the Order of the Local Government Board. The hon. Member for South Belfast says

that the Local Government Board were perfectly satisfied with the way in which she discharged her duties. That is not altogether the case. It is true that the Local Government Board were not aware that during these five years Miss Magill was acting as the deputy of her father, and, as a matter of fact, they were not satisfied with the collection of the rates during that time. They had to write no fewer than sixteen letters to the guardians pointing out the backward state of the collection. My hon. friend has referred to the Order of the 22nd of July, in which the Board disallowed the appointment of Miss Magill, and declared that this Order astonished the guardians and disgusted the country. I have some doubt in my own mind about the astonishment of the guardians. The hon. Member for South Mayo expressed the view that the appointment of Miss Magill was evidence of the growth of feeling in favour of the employment of women in this capacity. I do not think it represents anything of the kind. There have been, so far as the records of the Local Government Board go back, five cases altogether in which women were appointed by boards of guardians as rate collectors, and in every case the appointment has been disallowed by the Local Government Board. Now, Sir, I say that the natural inference, the true inference, from these facts is, not that the guardians are increasingly desirous of moving in the direction of giving these posts to female collectors, but that where the rate collector of a parish dies, there is a natural feeling of pity for the family, in consequence of which the guardians desire to provide for the bereaved in a way which I have no doubt does credit to their kindness of heart, but is not always to the advantage of the ratepayers. My hon. friend went on to speak of what he called the high-handed action of the Local Government Board in dissolving the Clogher Board of Guardians. I thought I had, in reply to questions put by my hon. friend and others, already made clear the reasons of the Local Government Board for dissolving the board of guardians. Miss Magill's appointment had been disallowed by the Local Government Board. She was thereupon re-elected by the guardians, and of course the appointment was disallowed by the Local Government Board again. It then became necessary for the Local

Government Board to fill the place of rate-collector, and this was done. Thereupon the guardians refused to sign the other collector's warrants, and this meant a paralysis of the poor law in the district. It was not until the guardians had been repeatedly warned of the inevitable result of the policy they were pursuing that we took the final step of dissolving the board. It was with extreme reluctance that I took that course, and as soon as possible I replaced the guardians. I am not the man to be prejudiced against the employment of women in any capacity; and I have been a constant friend of women whenever the question of admitting them to this or that elected capacity has arisen; and I can assure my hon. friend that if I had not been convinced that the post of collector in Ireland was not one which women can properly be asked to fill, I should certainly not have taken the course which I felt it my duty to take upon this occasion. The question I have had to decide is whether the process of collecting rates in Ireland is one which it is suitable for women to undertake. I took the trouble to get reports from the collectors in Ireland, as to the kind of work which frequently devolves upon a rate collector, and I will read some of the reports I have received:

"In Donegal the collectors report that the favourite method of rescuing cattle and sheep seized by the collectors for rates is by directing dogs to hunt the cattle, the persons directing the movements of the dogs being concealed at some distance. The collectors report that this makes it extremely difficult to make the seizures, as it requires great fleetness of foot and endurance on the part of the collector.

"Another report states that in a case of seizure of six head of cattle, a large crowd assembled with dogs and rescued the cattle from the collector, threatening personal violence. On another occasion, he seized three cows which were trespassing on an evicted farm on which the rates were due. The owner of the animals and a number of the neighbours came out with dogs and endeavoured to effect a rescue. The collector shot one of the dogs, but not having a licence for carrying arms, he was fined. On another occasion he seized a horse, and a rescue was effected; and again, when seizing some heifers, he was violently attacked, but he succeeded after immense trouble in beating off his assailants and retaining the animals. In the same collection the collector was followed for miles by persons whose property he had distrained, and it was only after great trouble he made good the seizure.

"A further report from the same district shows where the collector had distrained half a dozen sheep, and the neighbours with their dogs came out and attempted the rescue, but failed. The sheep were subsequently sold by auction.

"In North Mayo a collector, accompanied by his assistants, not long ago went in a boat to make a seizure; a free fight ensued and the people broke the oar over the collector and set his boat adrift. Another collector, accompanied by four assistants, was attacked by men with reaping hooks; and at one place the crowd was so violent that they had great difficulty in escaping. In the same county another collector reports that owing to the manner in which people systematically lock up their cattle, he has to lie out in ambush all night and effect a seizure at daybreak. Another collector in this district reports having made a seizure of five head of cattle in October. When driving them off, he was attacked by a crowd of fifty women, who threw stones and sods at him and endeavoured to effect a rescue. This collector states that he usually makes a seizure on horseback, and he has often had to gallop his horse for fear of attack when collecting rates."

I therefore submit that the work of distraining requires considerable physical strength and courage, and I have reluctantly come to the conclusion that a woman cannot properly be asked to perform it. My hon. friend has challenged the legality of the Order which the Local Government Board with my full concurrence, issued, by which women are made ineligible. I had come to the conclusion that this was not a post to which they could be appointed, and having in view the great expenditure of time and the enormous amount of trouble that this case had caused, I thought it was better to say, once and for all, whether it should be so or not. That was the reason for the general Order.

*MR. HEMPHILL: We have heard from the Chief Secretary for Ireland that this is a matter altogether in the discretion of the Local Government Board; that is the reason why it behoves this Committee to see whether that discretion has been properly exercised, because it is most important. The Chief Secretary is the President of the Local Government Board, and he is here to answer for the acts of that Board; but there is a power even higher than that, and that is the House of Commons in Committee, which

is fully competent to say whether that discretion has been properly used or not. Now, it is a remarkable thing that in the instances which, after a good deal of searching through the Local Government Board offices, had been discovered, and have been cited here, the dates have not been given by the right hon. Gentleman, and that they all occurred in the wildest parts of Ireland. I say that with all respect to the hon. Members for Donegal and Mayo, but it does not follow that a woman might not be made a collector for all that. It seems to be most extraordinary that, while here in London and in Greater London women may be created aldermen and councillors—"aldermen" is rather a misnomer, it should be "alderwomen"—yet in a quiet and orderly district of Ireland they are held to be incapable of being rate collectors. In the House of Lords I listened to one of the most able and one of the most gallant speeches I ever heard the Prime Minister make in favour of Women's Rights, and now we are to be told by the Local Government Board of Ireland that by a General Order women are to be disqualified, and thus that an Order by the Local Government Board may modify and repeal the Act of Parliament.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: The Act of Parliament gives the Local Government Board absolute discretion.

*MR. HEMPHILL: It is against that autocracy that I am appealing to the Committee.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: It is the Act of Parliament.

*MR. HEMPHILL: Yes, but I never presumed that the Local Government Board would act in such an autocratic manner. We are told because this lady was the daughter of the late collector and that the other ladies that had been nominated were widows of deceased collectors, that that was the reason for their appointments. I did not know that these matters were governed by what is called the law of primogeniture. I trust the House of Commons will be consistent with itself, and having passed the clause in the London Government Bill, which qualifies women for these important positions, that

Mr. Hemphill.

it will not stultify itself by saying now that the Local Government Board is exercising a right discretion in not appointing Miss Magill—not because she is not a person of intelligence—but merely by reason of her sex. I trust the House will teach a lesson to the Local Government Board, and say that it was never intended that ladies should be disqualified.

MR. RENTOUL (Down, East): Shame!

*MR. HEMPHILL: I see no shame in a lady being a candidate for such a position in a country where women are held in the highest respect. But whether it is a shame or not that in Ireland women have been elected to positions, and have made most excellent officials, and if a woman is not disqualified from being a guardian I see no reason why she should be disqualified from being a collector. The action of the Local Government Board is absolutely indefensible, and an insult to the Board of Guardians, and I have no doubt from the testimony that has been given by the Member for Belfast, that he would not be responsible for Miss Magill if she were not in every way most exceptionally qualified for the position.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: A very important question underlies this discussion. I do not think that there is any country in the world where it is more desirable that properly qualified women should be appointed to these positions than in Ireland. I have always stood up in this House in favour of granting to women every right of citizenship. Everybody who has ever visited France and seen the extraordinarily active and useful part which women take in the commercial life of that country must have often wished that the women of Ireland would take an active part in social life there. Now, here is a case where women had an opportunity of obtaining useful and proper employment, but the right hon. Gentleman takes advantage of the power given to him to disqualify them for that employment. With regard to the powers that he possesses under the Act of Parliament, I say he has exceeded them in disqualifying women for these appointments. He says he has full powers under

this Act, and goes the length of saying that we have no right to criticise him.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: No, I do not say so.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: Suppose he puts it in this way: that no man or woman who is a Protestant or who is a Catholic should be entitled to be a rate collector; would he not be exceeding the discretion, And in attaching a disqualification to women in the form he has done he exceeds his rights just as much. I do not believe any Minister of England occupying a similar position to that held by the right hon. Gentleman would have dared to issue such an Order. Is it not a grotesque feature of the discussion we have had on the London Government Bill that a question which has taken the collective wisdom of Parliament so long to settle could be settled by the right hon. Gentleman by a stroke of his pen? It is an absurdity, and it is an abuse of the powers he possesses. This lady, Miss Magill, had qualified for this position by doing the duty for her father for five years. She has discharged this duty, the noblest duty woman could do of helping her helpless father, and she was allowed to do it, and it was admitted that it was discharged in an admirable manner—so admirable that the Local Government Board did not know that it was she, and not her father, who was discharging it—and now when she desires the position for herself she is disqualified. The right hon. Gentlemen gives a number of instances which led him to take the action which he did. Nobody says that, in the most disturbed parts of the country, appointing female collectors would be the best way to meet the difficulty. But it used to be Ireland's boast that women could go through any part of Ireland without offence being offered them, and now it is said that a woman cannot be established as a rate collector lest she should be insulted. Sir, I am sorry that the right hon. Gentleman has taken this view, and I can only say that if the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Belfast moves a reduction of the Vote upon this matter I will do all I can to support him.

MR. WILLIAM MOORE: I hope, because I take an opposite view on this question to that of the hon. Member

for the Scotland Division, I shall not be considered as wanting in national chivalry or respect to women. But But I do think that if a lady rate-collector went to seize the cattle or stock of any inhabitant of Ireland, and if that gentleman was unwilling to pay, all the feelings of national chivalry would not prevent him from interfering with the woman. I am talking of a case where the collector makes the seizure in person. However, we are not considering only the case of Miss Magill; that is but a very minor part of the question. What I want to know from the Chief Secretary is whether or not it is the law in Ireland that a woman is eligible for this post. The right hon. Gentleman has not told us whether he has the benefit of the opinion of the law officers upon that point.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: No doubt Miss Magill was eligible, but I have not taken legal opinion on this point.

MR. WILLIAM MOORE: It would have occurred to me certainly that a woman was not eligible, but the Attorney-General for Ireland can possibly enlighten us. There was a case under the English Local Government Act. Lady Sandhurst was duly elected as a councillor, but proceedings were taken to set her election aside. These proceedings were not taken until after the expiration of the statutory period under which such proceedings should be instituted, but the court held that although the attempt to disqualify Lady Sandhurst was too late, she being a woman was never capable at any time of being elected at all owing to the disqualification at common law. It would occur to me that, on the same reasoning, at common law a woman would be equally ineligible to become a rate collector. I am more concerned, however, with the control of the Local Government Board over these local bodies in Ireland. It is very gratifying to find that we have in Ireland a Local Government Board and an Executive who do not hesitate when they are defied by a local body to interfere and assert their authority over a worthless body just as impartially in the case of a body in the West or South of Ireland. To all who wish to see the law properly carried out it is a very satisfactory thing that the Local Government Board had the pluck and courage to send out a sealed Order and stop a state of

things which, if carried out all over the country, would mean anarchy.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I see the Member for South Tyrone sitting at the end of the Treasury Bench. He is Miss Magill's representative in this House, and he is the representative of the English Local Government Board. Would he in that capacity be justified in issuing sealed Orders to destroy such authorities as he thought had acted *ultra vires*? Under the English Local Government Board women are allowed to hold these very offices, and the hon. Gentleman endorses that policy. In his own constituency, through the autocratic rule of Dublin Castle, women are excluded from the position which he gives them as the head or the chief agent of the English Local Government Board which he administers.

THE SECRETARY OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, Tyrone, S.): Not the head.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: He is a very admirable working member, and he makes his force felt. I think that is a very interesting object lesson. Then I have another question to which to call the attention of the Chief Secretary. The Local Government Board have made a series of orders which seem to be utterly *ultra vires* so far as the Act under which they are made is concerned. Two years ago waterworks which were to cost £5,000 were established in Bundoran. These waterworks were secured on the security of the town land on which Bundoran is situated. Maps were drawn and estimates arranged, and everything was done on that basis, and one instalment of the repayment has already been made. No one in Bundoran ever suggested that the town should be relieved of this burden, and yet what has happened is this. Since this Local Government Act has been established Mr. Bagwell, of the Board of Works, has an idea of uniformity; he is a theoretical man, who wishes the whole of the local districts to be subject to these charges, and because he desires it possibly to make the Act ridiculous.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: I really must protest against this being attributed to the influence of Mr. Bagwell.

Mr. William Moore.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Very well; I will not touch Mr. Bagwell again. These waterworks were established in Ballyshannon, and the town were quite willing and able to pay this £5,000, but some doctrinaire or philosopher in the Board of Works said, "We want uniformity; we want an enlarged taxable area"; and what does this apostle of uniformity do? He extends the area over which this debt should be collected so that peasants living twelve or fourteen miles away are to be rated for the Bundoran Waterworks, from which they will derive no benefit whatever. The inhabitants have had two public meetings to protest against this action. One meeting was presided over by the chairman of the District Council, and the other by the chairman of the Ballyshannon Town Commissioners, and the meetings represented 94.4 per cent. of the whole ratepaying population of the district. To do Bundoran justice, not a single person has spoken in favour of the town being relieved of a burden, which it is well able to bear, at the expense of the surrounding districts which are not able to bear it, and who will get no compensating benefit from it. It is not just that localities which have undertaken to bear certain expenses for the benefit of the particular locality should have their burdens removed and distributed over an entire area. Why should whoever is responsible act as if his one object in life was to bring the Local Government Board into conflict and antagonism with the popularly elected bodies? Why should he try to make the new system hateful to the people? I should like the Attorney-General, on the mere legalities of the case, apart altogether from the question of justice, to tell us by what legerdemain or jugglery of the Local Government Board it is possible that a locality, which had entered into a legal contract for the payment of a debt which they were anxious and well able to pay, should have that debt taken away from them and distributed over another and a poorer area?

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: The difficulty which the Local Government Board have to face in connection with this matter is that the Act prescribes that the public health and its charges should be treated in a certain way in special areas, and in order to simplify the rating and the keep-

ing of the accounts we thought it highly desirable to throw these public health charges over the entire rural district. We communicated with the Boards of Guardians on the subject, and in 94 cases out of the 159 we received answers in favour of the suggestion. In other cases the guardians objected, but after carefully considering the whole matter we came to the conclusion that it would be highly expedient in the interests of local government generally that these charges should be spread over the rural district with the exception of charges which refer to towns under town commissioners. I am quite ready to admit there are a certain number of cases, but not more than half a dozen in all, where such a proceeding is likely to impose a certain amount of hardship. The case of Bundoran is perhaps the strongest of those, but even in that case the amount of additional charge is only something slightly over 3d., while if the debt charge were dispersed over the entire rural district it would be only between 1d. and 2d. In the case cited by the hon. Member for South Mayo the annual charge is exceedingly small. The annual charge in the Claremorris case is only 2d., and when distributed over the entire area would be a very small fraction of a penny. The hon. Member will therefore admit that whatever may be said on principle as regards the distribution of the charge, the hardship in practice is practically *nil*. The Castlereagh case is somewhat stronger. The charge there is for sewerage and water supply, but over the larger area it only works out at a halfpenny in the £. I may remind the hon. Member that the larger the number of such charges there are in any one union the greater approximation you have to a just arrangement. With regard to the point of the hon. Member for South Donegal, I think it will be desirable, having regard to all the circumstances, to take the opinion of the Law Officers of the Crown upon the legality of the Order. If that opinion should be adverse to the Order I think it will be necessary to secure that the rate which is at present enforced should be legalised for the present year, otherwise obvious confusion would arise. We should take care that an arrangement in accordance with the law and one which would obviate anything like hardship or injustice would be arrived at. I trust after this explanation

hon. Members will not continue the discussion upon this point, as I am sure there are other matters which they desire to bring before the Committee.

MR. DILLON : The right hon. Gentleman says that the amount of the charge thrown upon the district in connection with the Castlereagh case is small ; but what I am particularly struck by is that the amount of friction and discontent created is extraordinarily great. The district is an exceedingly poor one, and the people come into the towns and say, "Are we called upon to pay for these costly improvements, when we get no benefit whatever from them?" It is not so much the amount of the rates as the injustice. Both the towns concerned have petitioned the Local Government Board to be allowed to pay their own expenditure, because the Order has involved the people of these towns in friction with the country people, which is exceedingly unjust and distasteful to the traders and others. I do trust that the right hon. Gentleman, however the law may be declared will alter all this. There is also one other aspect of the question which I desire to impress upon the right hon. Gentleman, and that is that in all small towns it will be impossible under present arrangements for them to execute any sanitary work whatever, because the cost will fall upon the district at large. I also desire to call the Chief Secretary's attention to the question of the trained nurses in workhouse infirmaries. The circular regulating this matter which has been issued by the Local Government Board is much too stringent and ought to be modified. If the right hon. Gentleman can see his way to do this it will be a great improvement, for the instructions contained in the circular are likely to lead to a good deal of friction.

MR. RENTOUL : As one who supported the Chief Secretary in carrying the Local Government Bill through this House, I am extremely anxious that this

Act should be carried into operation in Ireland as smoothly as possible. I may say that there is a good deal of dissatisfaction existing in different parts of Ireland with regard to the manner in which the Local Government Board have interfered with these newly-appointed bodies. Even amongst the Ulster loyalists I have seen letters written by them containing the most vulgar abuse in regard to my action in supporting the Chief Secretary and the methods he has adopted to carry out this Act. I think it is far better for me to tell the Chief Secretary plainly the exact state of affairs rather than say pleasant things here and let him find out the truth afterwards. As the right hon. Gentleman will gain credit or discredit from the success or failure of this Act, which is so largely his own, I do not think I could do him a greater kindness than to point out to him the immense friction which the interference with the new bodies by this Board in Dublin is causing. The Chief Secretary may be good enough to take upon his own shoulders the responsibility for what this Board does, but we know perfectly well that he is here most of his time, and that he is very much in the hands of the permanent officials in regard to what is done in Ireland. Of course, the general impression of all permanent officials is that they have practically reduced our system of government to a fine art. There is one case in particular which I desire to allude to, and it is one in which I have no sort of personal interest. At Downpatrick there are two banks—and this case raises the whole question of whether these local bodies have authority or not to conduct their own local business. The two banks are the Ulster Bank and the Northern Bank, and the Rural District Council of Downpatrick passed a resolution by a majority of forty-one votes to four asking the Local Government Board to transfer their account to the Northern Bank, but the Local Government Board refused to allow them to do so. Now

Mr. Rentoul.

the Northern Bank has got in Downpatrick three branches and four agencies, whereas the Ulster has only got one branch and one agency. But the Ulster Bank is the treasurer for the Infirmary, the County Asylum, the Urban District Council, and the Guardians. It is practically the treasurer for all the public bodies, and on the principle of fair play and competition on equal terms the Rural District Council of Downpatrick passed the resolution to which I have referred. The Northern Bank were prepared to offer the same terms as the Ulster Bank, but the Local Government Board refused to allow the transfer to take place. I do not think anything will tend more to stultify the action of the Local Government Board than such conduct as this, for it seems to me that this refusal can only have been dictated simply by a desire to interfere for the purpose of showing the power of the Board. The Chief Secretary stated, in reply to a question on this subject, that the reason why the Local Government Board had refused its permission was that the Northern Bank supporters had been canvassing in this matter. With regard to canvassing, I know that has been done in several cases by the different banks, so that the matter of canvassing does not appear to affect the question at all, and I do think that this public body ought to be allowed to choose its own treasurer. I have not the slightest interest in this matter, but I know that it is causing extreme feeling in the district which is concerned.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: Several hon. Members have been pressing upon me the desirability of altering the definition of "trained nurse." I may remind the Committee that this definition which we have given is not a new departure, for it is the same as that which has been adopted in Scotland. It will be within the recollection of this Committee that we were urged to extend the system of paying half the expenses of trained nurses out of the Local Taxation Fund. I tried to adopt that suggestion, but I found that

if we actually adopted it undoubtedly there would arise a great difficulty in regard to the employment of nuns in workhouses. Now, I come to the statement made by my hon. and learned friend who has just sat down. He has joined in a general complaint against the action of the Local Government Board in bringing this measure of local government in Ireland into operation. I am bound to say that I am not surprised at hon. Members opposite taking that course, but I am rather surprised that more allowance has not been made by hon. Members on this side of the House for the enormous difficulties connected with the inauguration of a completely new scheme. When the hon. Member spoke while this Vote was under discussion he spoke as if the Local Government Board was a body absolutely inimical to the spirit of the Act. That is absolutely contrary to the truth. In the first place, I have had some share in framing and carrying the Act itself through this House, and I think hon. Members will hardly be likely to take the view that I am anxious in any way administratively to curb those liberties which I have helped to confer upon these new bodies. In inaugurating this new system I have taken an active personal part at every single point of the proceedings, and there has not been a single important principle decided by our orders which I have not personally examined into myself and ultimately approved. Although it is true that in practice the Local Government Board invariably abides by the decision of its President, I take to myself the personal responsibility for all the many important decisions which have been come to. The final decision in every case has been sanctioned by me, and I take the full responsibility. But, Sir, I do not think that hon. Members who have been associated with this work can have any conception of the enormous difficulty and labour which has been experienced in bringing this Act into operation. I suppose the Local Government Board has had to write something like

2,000 letters every week during all the months which have elapsed since the commencement of the new system; and that Board has also issued something like 300 Orders, all of which have been absolutely necessary. Hon. Members have complained of the Local Government Board's interference with these bodies, but let me say that we have had ample testimony borne from numerous local authorities to the value of the assistance given to them in their difficulty by the Local Government Board. Time after time we have been pressed to give our opinion in innumerable cases, and we have done so to the utmost of our power and to the best of our ability. It is difficult for one who knows, like I know, how the Local Government Board officials have had to positively slave to bring this Act into successful operation, to listen with patience to such complaints as those which have been made by the hon. Members for Mid Tyrone and Cavan. It would be easy for me, if I had the time at my disposal, to answer seriatim every one of the charges which have been made against the Local Government Board, but I content myself with making this statement, which ought to put the assailants to shame. The officials of the Local Government Board have been working overtime day after day—some of them up to midnight—in order to bring this Act into operation, and it is absolutely and entirely false to say that they are anxious that this Act should be a failure. All these officials have done their duty well, and they have strained every nerve in the extremely difficult task which they have had to perform. It would be invidious to single out one official where all have done so well, but I cannot help saying that the Vice-president of the Board, on whom the principal burden has fallen, has shown through all these months a judgment, a capacity, a power of industry, and the power of putting heart into his subordinates when in difficulties, which is beyond all praise. The Act has come into operation with comparative smoothness and almost with

the absence of friction—although a little friction must necessarily attend the introduction of any new system ; but taking everything into consideration I am of opinion that the work of initiating this Act, which has been carried out by the Local Government Board, has been a great achievement, and one of which any department of the State, whether English or Irish, might justly be proud.

MR. McDERMOTT (Kilkenny, N.) : I think it is a great shame that in one of the unions which I represent the Local Government Board now expect three doctors to perform the services which have hitherto been performed by four. The Chief Secretary said that no one would suffer by this arrangement, but I would like to ask him how three medical

men can efficiently do the work which it used to take four to perform. I think if the right hon. Gentleman fully considers this matter he will see the advisability of preventing a fearful injustice by going back to the old system. In April, 1898 —

It being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolutions to be reported upon Monday next ; Committee also report Progress ; to sit again upon Monday next.

Adjourned at five minutes
after Twelve of the clock,
till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 3rd July 1899.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with :

LONDON, WALTHAMSTOW, AND EPPING FOREST RAILWAY (No. 2.)

The same was ordered to lie on the Table.

Standing Orders Committee—Report from, that the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the following Bills, viz. :

LONDON UNITED TRAMWAYS,

DERWENT VALLEY WATER, ought to be dispensed with, and the Bills allowed to proceed.

Read, and agreed to.

LONDON, WALTHAMSTOW, AND EPPING FOREST RAILWAY (No. 2) BILL.

Examiners' Certificates of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Monday next.

ROCHDALE CANAL BILL [Lords].

Committee to meet To-morrow.

IONIAN BANK BILL.

Committee to meet on Thursday next.

DUNDEE GAS, STREET IMPROVEMENTS, AND TRAMWAYS BILL [Lords].

Commons Amendments considered, and agreed to.

LEEDS CORPORATION BILL.

Committed : The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

MENSTON WATER BILL.

Committed.

CORK CORPORATION (FINANCE) BILL.

Read 3^d, and passed.

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PORTSMOUTH CORPORATION BILL [Lords].

Read 3^d, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

SCUNTHORPE URBAN DISTRICT GAS AND WATER BILL.

Read 3^d, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY BILL.

Read 3^d, with the Amendments ; a further Amendment made ; Bill passed, and returned to the Commons.

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE TRAMWAYS AND IMPROVEMENT BILL.

WEST METROPOLITAN RAILWAY BILL.

Brought from the Commons ; read 1^a ; and referred to the Examiners.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 5) BILL.

SOUTH-EASTERN RAILWAY BILL.

Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to.

INVERNESS HARBOUR BILL [Lords].

Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 12) BILL.

Committed : The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 4) BILL.

Committed to a Committee of the Whole House.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 5) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 7) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 8) BILL.

House in Committee (according to Order) : Bills reported without Amendment : Standing Committee negatived ; and Bills to be read 3^d To-morrow.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 9) BILL.

Order of the Day for the House to be put into Committee, read, and discharged.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 11) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (GAS) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDER (HOUSING OF WORKING CLASSES) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (POOR LAW) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 1) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 3) BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES) (No. 2) BILL.

House in Committee (according to Order): Bills reported without Amendment: Standing Committee negatived; and Bills to be read 3^a To-morrow.

GAS ORDERS CONFIRMATION (No 2) BILL [Lords].

Read 3^a, (according to Order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 16) BILL.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 7) BILL.

Read 3^a, (according to Order), and passed.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 17) BILL. (No. 151).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 10) BILL. (No. 152.)

Brought from the Commons; read 1^a; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners.

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

EDUCATION.

Minute of the Committee of Council on Education, dated 29th June 1899, modifying Articles 37, 42, and 130 (b) of the Day School Code, 1899.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES)—

No. 2302. France (Algeria);

No. 2303. China (Hankow);

No. 2304. Corea.

INDIA (INDIAN CURRENCY COMMITTEE, 1898).

Index and Appendices to the evidence taken before the Committee appointed to inquire into the Indian currency.

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE.

Report on the results of investigations into Cheddar cheese making, carried out on behalf of the Bath and West and Southern Counties Society, in the years 1891–98, by F. J. Lloyd, T.C.S., F.I.C.

CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD (IRELAND).

Report of the Board for the period from 1st April 1898 to 31st March 1899.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

FINANCE.

Finance accounts of the United Kingdom, for the year ended 31st March 1899: Laid before the House (pursuant to the Act) and ordered to lie on the Table.

PETITIONS.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BILL.

Petition for amendment of; of Vestry of the Parish of Chelsea; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

PREVENTION OF CORRUPTION BILL [Lords].

Petition in favour of; of the London Association for Protection of Trade; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

VACCINATION ACT, 1898.

Petition for repeal of; of Guardians of the Grantham Union; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

STANDING COMMITTEE.

Report from the Committee of Selection for the Standing Committee, That the Committee have added the Lord Brampton to the Standing Committee for the consideration of the Summary Jurisdiction Act (1879) Amendment Bill; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

POOR LAW ACTS AMENDMENT BILL [Lords].

House to be in Committee on Thursday next.

ANCHORS AND CHAIN CABLES BILL.

Amendments reported (according to Order), and Bill to be read 3^a To-morrow.

LONDON GOVERNMENT BILL.

Amendments reported (according to Order).

Clause 4 :—

Verbal Amendments agreed to.

Clause 6 :—

Drafting Amendments agreed to.

Clause 8 :—

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND: My Amendment to this clause is really to change the words of the former Act. I was surprised on the last occasion to hear noble Lords who have had great experience of county councils state that they had not found the words of the original Act inconvenient. I cannot help thinking that the words which I suggest more adequately imply the true meaning of the clause. I always understood that the words of the original Act had been inserted by some error, and I have certainly heard them complained of from time to time. Under the original Act the finance committee of a county council is really the controlling body. I will give an instance of what I mean. A committee of one of the bodies you are about to create is charged with the care of the streets of the borough, and wishes to repave a macadam street with wood. This proposal has to go before the finance committee, and, unless that committee recommend it, the county council cannot even entertain the proposal. If the finance committee think the expenditure undesirable, they cannot conscientiously recommend it, but, surely, the streets committee and not the finance committee ought to be able to decide a point of this kind. Practically, according to the wording of the Act, if the finance committee cannot see their way to approve of an expenditure proposed by the streets committee, or by any other committee, the council cannot entertain the recommendation at all. One noble Lord, the other day, said that as a matter of fact no friction had arisen. I admit that, so far as I know, no actual deadlock has occurred, but I have heard chairmen of finance committees say that under

the present arrangement great difficulty had been experienced. The words I propose to insert carry out what I think was the original intention of the framers of the Act. I agree that it is desirable that the finance committee should thrash out all financial arrangements and lay them before the council, in order that the council should decide the matter; but I do not think we should perpetuate the present anomaly, under which, without a recommendation from the finance committee, the council cannot entertain any proposal.

Amendment moved—

"In page 6, line 30, to leave out 'on the recommendation of,' and insert, 'after consideration of a report thereon by.'"—(*The Duke of Northumberland.*)

***THE MARQUESS OF RIPON:** I hope the noble Duke in charge of this Bill will not agree to the Amendment, which goes a long way to reverse the decision the House came to the other night. The noble Duke (the Duke of Northumberland) has very great objection to the powers which the Act of 1888 confers on the finance committees of county councils, possibly as a result of his experience in his own county; but I have observed that both to-night and on the previous occasion he gave no instance of the deadlock which he appears to fear having actually occurred in practice. County councils have been in existence a good number of years, and if no case can be produced where the results of the clause have been unsatisfactory, I do not think we should now set to work to alter it with regard to the new London bodies. It is true that the clause gives large power to the finance committee; but the county council can refer back any question to that committee, or to any other committee that may arise upon their reports, and I am very much disinclined to believe that a finance committee would be found which would prevent the carrying out of the clearly expressed views of the council. I do not understand why the noble Duke opposite should be so anxious to give the new London bodies greater power and independence, and place upon them less checks than exist under the present law with regard to county councils. We have heard some hard things said about the London vestries, whose place these new bodies are to take. I am not going to

bring any accusation against the London vestries, but I am bound to say that the restrictions and checks which have been found necessary in the case of county councils are likely to be still more required in the case of the new bodies Parliament is now creating.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (The Duke of DEVONSHIRE): As the House is aware, the whole of this clause was inserted contrary to the opinion of the Government, and I shall be guided in the course which I shall take by the opinion which may be expressed by members of county councils, by the weight of whose authority I think the House was principally induced to accept the Amendment on the last occasion. I should myself be disposed to think that the words proposed by the noble Duke behind me were an improvement on the words of the Local Government Act of 1888, but I should be very glad if we could have an opportunity of hearing the opinion of other Members of the House who have served upon county councils.

EARL SPENCER: I regard the finance committee as a very useful check on expenditure, and I think it is not desirable that any one committee, which does not know what the whole of the expenditure of the borough may be, should have the actual power of recommending an expenditure to the council without the matter having previously gone to a finance committee. I hope, therefore, that your Lordships will adhere to the words now existing, and not accept the alteration proposed by the noble Duke.

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK: As I expressed an opinion in favour of this clause in Committee, I should like to say one word upon it now. I do not consider the Amendment one of any very considerable importance, because, if a collision occurred between the finance committee and the council, the views of the council must in the end prevail. The words had better remain as they are in the clause, for, if you change them, you will enable the council to vote an expenditure immediately upon the receipt of a report from the finance committee adverse to the expenditure. The best course to adopt in such a case would be to refer the matter back again to the finance committee, and then, if there

The Marquess of Ripon.

was still a difference between the two, the council should prevail. I shall vote against the Amendment of the noble Duke.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I have been a member of the finance committee of my county ever since the formation of the County Council, and we have not met with any of the difficulties to which the noble Duke referred. The finance committee is an extremely useful body, and it seems to me that it is necessary to have some committee in the council who can put together, as it were, in one glance, all the various items of expenditure and receipts which have to be dealt with. Unless a committee has the whole balance-sheet before them, they cannot form a sound judgment upon any proposal. To deal with matters piecemeal is to open the door to jobbery by individual members; further than that, a finance committee is absolutely necessary if the work of the council is to be efficiently done. A finance committee not only serves as a useful check on expenditure, but also performs a duty which, in a body of that kind, is absolutely necessary. I therefore think it is very desirable indeed that the provision should be maintained.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND: I entirely agree with what has fallen from noble Lords opposite as to the importance of finance committees. I admit that the new councils should have some committee which will have under its purview the whole expenditure of the council; but the real question is whether the power of the finance committee should be so absolute that, if they do not sanction an expenditure, the matter cannot come before the council.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I am very sorry to interrupt the noble Duke, especially as he is referring to something said by myself; but I think it would be extremely inconvenient if we were to break through the rules of the House and discuss matters on Report in the same way as we discuss them in Committee. The noble Duke is not in order in making another speech.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBELAND: I beg your Lordships' pardon. I was

under the impression that the mover of an Amendment had a right to reply.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Drafting Amendments agreed to.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: County councils raise their funds by sending precepts to other authorities, but they do not receive from any other authorities precepts requiring them to raise money. On the other hand, borough councils receive precepts from county councils and boards of guardians requiring them to raise money by means of rates. The payments made in pursuance of these precepts are obligatory, and it does not seem right, and probably was not intended, that the finance committee's, of the new borough councils should question the propriety of these precepts. Therefore, I think it necessary that a saving clause should be inserted.

Amendment moved—

"In page 6, line 38, after 'incurred,' insert, 'Provided that the foregoing provisions shall not apply to payments made in pursuance of a precept from another authority.'"—(*The Lord President of the Council.*)

On Question, "That these words be here inserted," agreed to.

Clause 10 :—

LORD MONKSWELL: I should like to say one word with regard to the first subsection of Clause 10. I have this morning received from the Accountant to the Shoreditch Vestry a suggestion which I think is of importance. He points out that under this section only one person—the Town Clerk—has power to prepare lists of voters and the jury lists, and that there is no provision whatever for appointing a deputy. My correspondent says, I think justly, that this section must in course of time lead to inconvenience when the Town Clerk is ill and unable to perform his duty.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: Clause 24 makes the necessary provision with regard to the appointment of a deputy in case of the illness or absence of the Town Clerk.

Clause 16 :—

LORD MONKSWELL: It has been represented to me, on behalf of the Com-

mons Preservation Society, that it would be possible under this clause for the Commissioners to interfere with local Acts relating to commons and open spaces. I do not know whether the noble Duke takes that view, but I think it would be undesirable to give the Commissioners power to do this. I would suggest that these Acts should be placed in the same category as the Building Acts.

Amendment moved—

"In page 10, line 31, after '1894,' to insert, 'or Acts relating to commons and open spaces.'"—(*The Lord Monkswell.*)

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: A saving clause with regard to open spaces was inserted in Clause 31 in the other House, at the instance of Mr. Bryce. It appeared both to him, as I understand, and to the draughtsmen, that it was unnecessary to exclude Acts relating to commons and open spaces from the local Acts, which can be repealed under this clause. There is not the slightest intention of enabling the Commissioners to meddle in any way with open spaces or commons. But it was thought that it might be desirable that they should have power to alter, by scheme, the mode of appointment of trustees or managers under local Acts, so as to make the provisions of those Acts correspond with the new form of government which is being established by the Bill. It is impossible to know what is in all these local Acts. It may be that churchwardens are in some cases *ex officio* managers, and it would be desirable to amend the local Acts by substituting nominees of the borough council. By not inserting any reference to these Acts in this clause, no intention whatever is indicated that power will be taken to interfere in any way with the law relating to the regulation of open spaces.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: Before I proceed to move the Amendment to Clause 16 standing in my name, I think it may be convenient that I should take this opportunity of stating the names of the Commissioners proposed to be appointed under Clause 15 to prepare such orders and schemes as will be required for carrying the Bill into effect. The first is Sir Hugh Owen, late Secretary of the Local

Government Board, who will be chairman. I should like here to express the deep obligations of the Government to Sir Hugh Owen, who, as the House is aware, has just retired from the arduous duties of Secretary of the Local Government Board, for undertaking the extremely difficult and arduous task of presiding over the Commissioners. The two other Commissioners will be Sir Samuel Johnson, Town Clerk of Nottingham, and Mr. Alfred Tristram Lawrence, Q.C. The Amendments which I have to move to Clause 16 have been suggested by Sir Hugh Owen, who has pointed out that only the draft schemes are required to be published by the Schedule to the Municipal Corporations Act, but that the language of this clause might require the schemes to be advertised in full, a proceeding which would involve a great deal of unnecessary expense. All that is required is that notice shall be given as to where the draft schemes can be seen and copies obtained.

Amendment moved—

"In page 11, line 18, after 'Gazette,' insert, 'and in such other manner as the Committee of Council may direct, of a draft scheme having been prepared or'; line 21, after the first 'the,' insert, 'draft scheme or,' and after 'Gazette' insert 'or in the manner required by the Seventh Schedule to the Municipal Corporations Act, 1882.'"—(*The Lord President of the Council.*)

On Question, "That these words be here inserted," agreed to.

Drafting Amendment agreed to.

Clause 18 :—

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: My Lords, I beg to move the addition to Section 1 of a sub-section providing that, if the Commissioners under this Act make a special report to Parliament, that by reason of anything done under any of the Adoptive Acts, or for any other exceptional reason, it is impracticable to deal with a detached part of a parish in manner required by the foregoing provisions of this section, those provisions shall not apply. My amendment further provides that the provisions of Section 1 of the clause shall not apply to the hamlet of Knightsbridge. It will be convenient if I state to the House the arrangement which the Government propose as to the question of Westminster and Knightsbridge, and also as to

The Duke of Devonshire.

Kensal Rise. In the first place, we propose to insert provisions which will distinctively secure that Knightsbridge shall not be separated from the borough of Westminster or from the parish of St. Margaret, Westminster. Both are, by the Schedule, included in the borough of Westminster, and there is no intention of detaching them. This proviso is intended to secure that. Certain minor alterations in the boundaries of the parish will require to be made. There are cases in which parts of houses are in different parishes, and others in which the back gardens are in one parish and the house in another. The Commissioners will be empowered, but not directed, to take into consideration the point raised the other night by Lord Glenesk, as to whether it may not be expedient to separate Kensington Palace and some of the houses in Kensington Palace Gardens from the borough of Westminster and attach them to the borough of Kensington. The Kensington authorities are, I believe, ready to make any equitable compensation for the loss of rateable value which this may entail. As to Kensal Rise, the House is aware that that is a detached part of Chelsea. If the policy which has always been adopted in the case of detached portions of parishes is followed, Kensal Rise ought to be annexed either to Kensington or Paddington, or divided between them. For many reasons, however, into which it is not necessary to go, neither Kensington nor Paddington desire that to be done, and certain administrative difficulties, the chief of which, I believe, is connected with a public library, have been pointed out. The Amendment I am now moving is to enable the Commissioners, if they find insuperable difficulties in the administrative arrangements which would follow such a mode of dealing with Kensal Rise as would be in accordance with the general principles of the Bill, to make a special report upon that question, whereupon the provisions of the section would not apply. It will be left to the Commissioners to devise a scheme, if they are able, applying the general policy of the Bill to the case of Kensal Rise.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 11, to leave out lines 39 to 42, and insert, ('Provided that—(a) The foregoing provisions of this section shall not apply to the hamlet of Knightsbridge; and (b) If the Commissioners

under this Act make a special report to Parliament that, by reason of anything done under any of the adoptive Acts or for any other exceptional reason, it is impracticable to deal with a detached part of a parish in manner required by the foregoing provisions of this section, those provisions shall not apply.”
—(*The Lord President of the Council.*)

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY ; I troubled the House on the last occasion with some observations about this place with the disputed name, which I call Kensal Town, and which the noble Duke perhaps more properly calls Kensal Rise, but I think the Amendment suggested by the noble Duke will substantially meet the difficulty. I have received a copy of a resolution passed by the Kensington Vestry, from which it appears that that body will be well pleased if there is no possibility of their obtaining Kensal Town. At the same time, they say they would be satisfied if Kensal Town could remain a part of Chelsea, or if the decision in this matter were left to the Boundary Commissioners after hearing the representatives concerned. A representation is also made by Chelsea asking that words should be inserted to secure that the districts concerned should be heard. For my own part, I am under the impression that the Commissioners would certainly hear persons concerned, but I think it would give great satisfaction if the words “the Commissioners under this Act, after hearing representatives of any parish interested,” were inserted.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE : As the clause stands the Commissioners would certainly hear the representatives of any parish interested, but there is no objection to the insertion of the words proposed.

***THE DUKE OF WESTMINSTER** : I was taken by surprise the other day by the motion with regard to Kensington Palace, and I spoke rather strongly on the subject, understanding that the feeling of Westminster was adverse to giving up any part of the City of Westminster. I am informed that on consideration they are inclined to be more generous, and I believe the arrangement now proposed by the noble Duke, the Lord President, will not be otherwise than satisfactory to Westminster. As they will retain the hamlet of Knightsbridge, they are not indisposed,

if the Commissioners think fit, to give up Kensington Palace, as they have a good many other palaces in the borough.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY : Perhaps I may be permitted to state at this stage that Lord Windsor was good enough to inform me that he considered the Amendment of the noble Duke quite sufficient to meet the case, and that he had no intention, therefore, to move the Amendment of which he had given notice with regard to Kensal Town.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE : I ought to have stated that I propose to transpose the order of the two sub-sections in my Amendment. I understand that the inhabitants of St. Margaret's are a little afraid that the provisions of Sub-section (b) may apply to Knightsbridge, and I therefore propose to place Sub-section (b) of my Amendment before Sub-section (a), which will remove any doubt on the subject.

On Question, “That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause,” resolved in the negative.

On Question, “That the words proposed to be inserted stand part of the clause,” agreed to.

Drafting Amendment agreed to.

LORD MONKS WELL : The object of the Amendment I now propose is to enable me to move, when we come to Schedule 1, that the case of South Hornsey should be settled by Parliament, and not by the Commissioners. I imagine that, if these words are not inserted, it will be impossible to move in the direction I wish when the schedule is reached.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE : Had not the noble Lord better state the case now ?

LORD MONKS WELL : By all means. On the last occasion, when I raised the question of South Hornsey, the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Jersey) stated that I was entirely in error in asserting that South Hornsey was in favour of being annexed to London. I was very much surprised to hear the noble Earl state that the people of South Hornsey desired to be joined to Middlesex, but on

inquiry I find that the vote to which the noble Earl referred had no reference whatever to the question before the House, but to the question whether or not South Hornsey should remain an administrative unit. I do not know that my Amendment is of very great importance, because it is perfectly clear, I should say, that the Commissioners are certain to annex the whole of South Hornsey to Stoke Newington. I think it is just as well, however, that Parliament should decide this case for the Commissioners, and relieve the inhabitants of South Hornsey from any anxiety. It is perfectly obvious that South Hornsey cannot remain an administrative unit, because one part of it, known as the island, is entirely surrounded by London—that part will be joined to Stoke Newington; and there is no doubt that the remaining part of South Hornsey, called the peninsula, will be annexed either to Hornsey or to Stoke Newington. The fact that Stoke Newington contains only 35,000 inhabitants, as against 70,000 in Hornsey, is an argument in favour of South Hornsey being joined to Stoke Newington. Moreover, Finsbury Park cuts off South Hornsey entirely from Hornsey, and, geographically speaking, South Hornsey has much more connection with the County of London than with Middlesex.

Amendment moved—

"In page 12, line 15, after 'shall,' to insert, 'save as hereinafter excepted.'"—(*The Lord Monkswell.*)

***THE EARL OF JERSEY**: In the statement I made to the House on the last occasion, I was not so incorrect as the noble Lord seems to imply. The question before the electors was, "Do you wish South Hornsey to be taken from the county of Middlesex and added to London?" This question was answered in the negative by 1,817 persons, and in the affirmative by only 30. I contend that that was a vote distinctly against South Hornsey being annexed to the County of London. This is not a question to be decided by Parliament. The Bill makes it perfectly clear that it can come up before the Commissioners, and with this provision the County Council of Middlesex are perfectly satisfied. The noble Lord has another and more subtle reason than that of preventing the Middlesex County Council from being heard

Lord Monkswell.

before the Commissioners for moving this Amendment, as the Amendment, if carried, would deprive the Middlesex County Council of any claim for compensation in the event of transfer. On the other hand, if they are heard before the Commissioners, they may advance a claim for compensation for the territory of which they are deprived. Surely it is an accepted principle that, when an area is taken from a county, the County Council should have the opportunity of claiming reasonable compensation. This is an illustration of the policy of the London County Council, of trying to snatch their neighbour's territory, which makes that Council distrusted and disliked.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I am rather surprised to hear compensation mentioned. I do not know what the position of the County Council of Middlesex may be. It may have a somewhat peculiar privilege in that respect, but I have known an area to be severed from the county to which I belong, very much against our will, but we had no compensation, nor, as I understand, any claim to compensation. If there is any special power in this Bill with regard to compensation, I should like to know from what quarter it is derived.

LORD MONKSWELL: I had not the slightest idea that the question of compensation was involved in my Amendment. If it is, I will withdraw my Amendment at once.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: I cannot state positively whether a question of compensation will be involved or not, but undoubtedly the rateable value of the area is considerable, and the county of Middlesex may be very unwilling to lose it unless some provision for compensation can be proposed. At all events, we consider that it is very undesirable to disturb the arrangement by which the Commissioners will have the power of adding the area to the borough of Stoke Newington, and it is extremely probable they will do so. It is, in our opinion, very undesirable to alter the permissive language of the clause. I hope the noble Lord will not press his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Verbal Amendments agreed to.

Clause 20 :—

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND: My Lords, I have been asked to move the Amendment which stands in the name of Lord Glenesk. I understand that it is not contested.

Amendment moved, to insert as a new clause—

“An Order in Council under this Act may detach Kensington Palace from the borough of Westminster, and attach it to the borough of Kensington.”—(*The Duke of Northumberland.*)

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: This Amendment is agreed to.

On Question, “That this clause be here inserted,” agreed to.

Clause 22 :—

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: The Right Rev. Prelate (the Archbishop of Canterbury) has an Amendment to Clause 22, which, as he is not able to be present to-day, he proposes to move on the Third Reading. I have been in communication with the Right Rev. Prelate, and have informed him that the general policy of the Commissioners will be to vest the appointment of churchwardens in the parishioners of the ecclesiastical district, and that an instruction to that effect will be given to the Commissioners. I think it probable that, after this intimation, the Right Rev. Prelate will not think it necessary to move his Amendment. If he does think it necessary to do so, it can be moved on the Third Reading.

Clause 23 :—

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: I beg to move a new clause after Clause 23, exempting members of borough councils, borough treasurers, and town clerks from service on all juries. I believe there is a direct precedent for this exemption, which will be found in the Act passed in 1870, dealing with the remuneration and exemption of juries, and which states in the schedule of those classes who are exempt from serving as jurymen, “members of the council of a municipal corporation of any borough,” etc. I beg to move the insertion of this clause

Amendment moved—

“After Clause 23, to insert as a new clause, ‘The members of borough councils, borough

treasurers, and town clerks, during the time that they hold office under this Act, shall enjoy exemption from service on all juries.”—(*The Earl of Portsmouth.*)

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: I only had notice of this Amendment this morning. It is necessary that I should further examine the Jury Law to see whether it is possible to entertain the Amendment. If the noble Lord wishes to press it, I would ask him to put it down on the Third Reading.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause 25 :—

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: I move to amend this clause by substituting the London County Council for the Local Government Board as the authority for sanctioning alteration in the wards of a metropolitan borough. The noble and learned Lord, the Chancellor of the Duchy, said that under the Bill the whole question rested with the Local Government Board, but that is not the case. So far as the first division of borough council areas into Parliamentary districts and wards is concerned, it lies with the Privy Council. But it is proposed to give the power of making subsequent alterations to the Local Government Board under the present clause. I should like to remind the House of the present arrangements for the division of the various areas in London into wards and polling districts. So far as parish and vestry elections are concerned, the county council can divide them in the first instance, and can make alterations from time to time. So far as the county council elections are concerned, the county council have power to divide the districts into wards and polling districts in the first instance, but have not the power to alter them from time to time, and I understand that the Chancellor of the Duchy agrees with me that the county council should have this power. So far as Parliamentary elections are concerned, the county council has the power of dividing Parliamentary boroughs into polling districts, where such are in more than one petty sessional district, but where they are coterminous with petty sessional districts the duty is with the Justices. The principle which has animated the council in the past has been to make the various districts coterminous

for vestry and election of guardians purposes, and so that they should not conflict with Parliamentary or council elections. That seems to me, my Lords, to be a thoroughly sound principle, which should be maintained. If the county council have been considered worthy of the power in the past, it is desirable that the power should remain in the hands of the council. It will simplify matters and prevent difficulties. In a former part of the Bill an alteration was made in the other House, by which the power of sanctioning loans was transferred from the Local Government Board to the county council, with an appeal to the Local Government Board. I would suggest that, even if the Government be not willing to accept my Amendment as it stands, they may be willing to agree to a further Amendment giving the duties of this sub-division to the county councils in the first instance, with a power of appeal, if necessary, to the Local Government Board against any alleged injustice.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 25, page 14, lines 31 and 35, to leave out 'Local Government Board' and insert, 'London County Council.'"—(*The Lord Tweedmouth.*)

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: The noble Lord desires that the county council, where they have jurisdiction to make the various districts, should have power to alter them from time to time. That suggestion seems a good one, but we have no power to give effect to it in this Bill. I think it should be given effect to in the next County Council Bill that is presented. With regard to the principal suggestion of the noble Lord, the matter was considered in the House of Commons, and it was thought that within the area of these borough councils the Local Government Board was the best tribunal to determine the wards and polling districts. There was no particular reason shown

why, when you are establishing borough councils with some sort of independence there should be an overruling body to make these provisions other than the Local Government Board. I was struck by my noble friend's willingness to take the Local Government Board as a Court of Appeal from the London County Council, although he does not wish that Department to be the primary body in these matters. Surely, it is better to go direct to the Local Government Board, and to accept the Bill as it stands in this respect, endorsed as it has been, after full consideration, in the other House of Parliament.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I do not think my noble friend's object in bringing forward this Amendment is simply to secure that the county council should have this power in order to preserve any of the privileges or add to the authority of that body. The noble Lord desires that there should be one authority, whether it be the county council or the Local Government Board, because if you do not have one authority you will run the risk of these matters being dealt with on different principles, and you will not have any complete and carefully considered system. Either the Local Government Board should take over the whole of this duty, or the county council should be allowed to discharge it. As the county council is the existing authority exercising this power, it seems natural, unless there is some reason to distrust the county council, to leave the power with them. My noble friend has not brought forward his Amendment merely from a county council point of view.

On Question, whether the words proposed to be left out shall stand part of the clause, their Lordships divided:—Contents, 98; Not-Contents, 26.

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*THE DUKE OF WESTMINSTER: I do not propose to move the Amendment to Sub-section (a) standing in my name, which provides that an Order in Council under this Act shall give an appropriate name to each of the Metropolitan boroughs other than Westminster, which shall be continued to be called the City of Westminster. Westminster has enjoyed that title since the time of Henry VIII., and we desire to retain unbroken that historic connection. As an arrangement has been arrived at by the Government, in order that the title of the City of Westminster may be retained, I do not propose to move the Amendment.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: It is very doubtful whether the Borough of Westminster would not have the right to the title of City under the charter of Henry VIII. In the opinion of the Government that title ought to be conferred by the Queen by a supplementary charter, and not by the provisions of any Act of Parliament. It would, of course, be irregular for me to state what advice will be given to Her Majesty as to the granting of a supplementary charter, if that should be found necessary. But I

think my noble friend may rest assured that the wishes which he has expressed in the name of the inhabitants of Westminster will not be lost sight of, and I trust that a means will be found of giving effect to them.

First Schedule:—

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: I move to insert the words "including the Tower of London and the Liberties thereof," after the words "the area consisting of the parishes of Mile End Old Town, and St. George's-in-the-East, and the districts of the Limehouse and Whitechapel Boards of Works." It is thought that the words "Whitechapel Board of Works" do not include the Tower of London, and that the words I suggest ought to be added.

Amendment moved,

"In the First Schedule, in page 20, line 15, after 'Works,' to insert, 'including the Tower of London and the Liberties thereof.'"
—(*The Lord Tweedmouth.*)

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: It is doubtful whether the words are necessary, but they will do no harm, and I will accept them.

On Question, "That these words be here inserted," agreed to.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH : The next Amendment standing in my name deals with the great Borough of Wandsworth, which it is proposed to constitute under this Bill. It seems to me that this borough is as excessive in its area and acreage as the new Borough of Westminster is in its rateable value. The proposed Borough of Wandsworth will contain 9,285 acres, which, in my opinion, is altogether too large an area for local government purposes. My Amendment proposes to divide the district of the Wandsworth Board of Works into two boroughs, one consisting of the parishes of Wandsworth and Putney, which contain 4,668 acres, a population of 78,667, and a rateable value of £542,053; and the other consisting of the parishes of Clapham, Streatham, and Tooting, which contain 4,617 acres, a population of 108,597, and a rateable value of £812,119. The Board of Works, which administers the district at the present time, is divided into five Committees—one Committee for each parish; and I am informed that these five Committees act practically independently, though they report, of course, to the District Board. Still, for all intents and purposes, the local government of Wandsworth is carried on by these five separate Committees. The Amendment I propose will divide the area naturally by means of the common. The population of Wandsworth has increased during the last twenty-five years by more than 150 per cent., and it is estimated that in the next twenty-five years that rate of increase will be still further accelerated, so that this area twenty-five years hence will contain at least 500,000 people. I think the administration of the district will be greatly facilitated if it is divided as I suggest, and, if this is not done, it will be found necessary at no distant time to subdivide the borough in order to secure its proper administration.

Amendment moved—

"In line 17, to leave out 'the district of the Wandsworth Board of Works,' and insert, 'the area consisting of the parishes of Wandsworth and Putney. The area consisting of the parishes of Clapham, Streatham, and Tooting'; and in line 29, to leave out 'of the ancient Parliamentary borough of Westminster.'"—(*The Lord Tweedmouth.*)

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE : I do not say this question is one upon which the arguments are of an overwhelming character on either side. But I think it would be better to maintain the decision of the other House, which has the advantage of containing representatives of the localities concerned, and therefore is in a better position to form a judgement as to the wishes of the inhabitants than your Lordships. So far as we have been able to ascertain, the inhabitants are strongly in favour of the larger area. The only vestry election which has taken place since these proposals were made has resulted in the return, by a very large majority, of vestrymen who were in favour of unity as opposed to division. It would be quite useless and unnecessary for me to enter into any discussion of the figures, either of population or area, of the proposed borough; but, believing that the other House was in a better position to form a judgment on this subject, I would ask your Lordships to support the decision which was arrived at by the House of Commons.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY : The information which I have does not seem to be in accordance with the information which has been supplied to the noble Duke, as I have received a memorial from the Vestry of Wandsworth which goes the other way. Possibly some vestry election may have taken place since the memorial was drawn up, but, so far as I can judge, the district, as proposed in the Bill, will be inconveniently large, and will have to be divided at no very distant date by means of another Bill for that purpose.

On Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause," agreed to.

***LORD HAWKESBURY :** I beg to move to amend the schedule by omitting the provision that one of the boroughs should be the area of the ancient Parliamentary Borough of Westminster, in order to divide that area into two boroughs—one consisting of the parishes of St. Margaret and St. John, Westminster, and the parish of St. George, Hanover Square; and the other of the parish of St. James, Westminster, and the parish of St. Martin-in-the-Fields, and the district of the Strand Board of Works.

In moving this Amendment, I hope it is unnecessary for me to disclaim any hostile feeling as regards this Bill, for I assure your Lordships that I agree entirely with many noble Lords who spoke during the Second Reading Debate, that the Bill is not a Party measure, but is welcomed from all sides of the House as an honest attempt to deal with the question of London Government. It is a Bill which we hope will improve the condition of affairs in the Metropolis, and induce the inhabitants to take a greater interest in their local affairs than they have done hitherto. It is in that spirit that I have placed this Amendment upon the Paper. The area proposed in the Bill is, I urge, far too large to be economically worked, and, I am informed, the immediate effect will be a very considerable addition to the burdens of the ratepayers. It certainly will be so in St. George's, Hanover Square, and St. James's, Piccadilly, and in the latter parish I am informed, by those who have the best means of knowing, that the rates will be increased by sevenpence in the £. The rateable value of the new borough will be £5,000,000, and that is larger than the rateable value of any municipality in England, and larger than that of the City itself. It does seem to me that no valid reason has been given why this very large area should be created, and why the privileges of local self-government should be taken away from districts which now possess them, and have possessed them for so many centuries. No doubt some of the proposed municipal areas are as large; Wandsworth, for instance, but I need scarcely point out the difference of circumstances between Wandsworth and the districts to which my Amendment refers, running as they do into the very heart of London. Areas in the centre of London should be smaller, that supervision may be better carried on, and local government better conducted. I notice that Her Majesty's Government have borne this in mind, and evidently feel the propriety of it, in the two districts which adjoin the one of which I am speaking—Holborn and Finsbury—which are very much smaller, as a glance at the map will show. Holborn, Finsbury, Chelsea, and the City of London are all smaller than Greater Westminster, and, with the exception of the City, none of them are of the importance of the districts to which

my Amendment refers. What is the reason for the exceptional treatment of these districts? I refuse to listen to the suggestion that it is due to Party or to political motives. I put that on one side at once. Then, what is the reason? Is it that these districts have shown inability to manage their own local affairs? I do not think that can be said. I believe that the parishes of St. James's and St. Martin's have been managed as well as any parishes in London. It cannot be said that the inhabitants of these parishes have asked for the great change which is proposed to be made. As a matter of fact, all but one vestry have petitioned Parliament against this proposal. So far as I am able to ascertain, the only reason given is that the proposed area formerly constituted the ancient Borough of Westminster, and that the historic associations of the ancient City of Westminster ought not to be interfered with. I have a very great love for antiquarian research and the study of history, and I should be the last person in the world to desire that historic associations should be forgotten. But, in legislating in matters of this kind, surely we must think of the needs of the present day and the vast and increasing population of the Metropolis. There is no question but that Westminster is an ancient and historic city, and if it was not so from early times as being a Royal Peculiar, it certainly became so when Henry VIII. made it a bishopric by letters patent dated 18 December, 1540, and appointed Thomas Thirlby, the dean of the King's Chapel, Bishop, allotting the county of Middlesex, except the vill of Fulham, as his see, which, however, only lasted nine years and three months, for on the 29th March, 1550, Edward VI. dissolved it, and translated the first and only bishop to Norwich. That it continued a city, however, is evidenced by its being so described in the Act of the 27 Queen Elizabeth, 1585, whereby the Government of the City of Westminster (which in earlier times was in the hands of the abbot and monks) was vested in the dean and chapter, they appointing the lay officers, the high steward, high bailiff, sixteen burgesses, and twelve assistants. But the parishes and districts I have alluded to have enjoyed the right of self-government for centuries, and because they are liberties of Westminster, why should that right be taken from them? The parish of St. James has managed its

local affairs since 1685, and the parish of St. Martin for a much longer period. Westminster returned Members to Parliament from the first year of Edward VI. down to the year 1885. The old Parliamentary borough was then divided into the three boroughs of the Strand, St. George's, Hanover Square, and Westminster, which are to be amalgamated for municipal purposes by this Bill, and if the ancient Parliamentary boroughs are to be taken as the units, why is it only done in this case? This great area includes three poor law unions, four vestries under Schedule A of the Metropolis Management Act, 1855, one district board, and ten distinct parishes, with a rateable value, as I have said, of five millions. The tendency in recent years has been to create smaller districts where the need arose. Such has been the case in the last few years, and Hammersmith has been taken from Fulham, Battersea from Wandsworth, Stoke Newington from Hackney, and there are other instances of a similar kind. The question is not, as the noble Earl (the Earl of Onslow) put it, Why should not this important district receive municipal privileges? but, rather, Why should not its component parts continue to enjoy those privileges and administer their own affairs, in the same way as in years past? The recent Royal Commission, after hearing evidence in 1894, recommended that not only the Strand borough, but St. George's and St. Margaret's and St. John's parishes would each of them be a suitable area to be constituted a separate borough; and, prior to the introduction of this Bill, the Vestry of St. Margaret's was in favour of being left to manage their own affairs separately, in accordance with that recommendation. In the early part of last year the Home Secretary (Sir Matthew White Ridley), in addressing a public meeting at the Battersea Town Hall, organised by the London Municipal Society, is reported to have said that no Government in its senses would desire to propose that any vestry should be compulsorily amalgamated to form an area for incorporation. What is intended, said the right hon. Gentleman, is that if districts come and ask for a charter of incorporation, the law shall not prevent them from receiving it. The Strand borough has an incontestible claim to be incorporated as a separate municipality. It is a Parliamentary borough (not a mere Division), a county

council division, and includes the area of three local authorities, covering 615 acres in the centre of London, and also of two unions of the rateable value of rather more than £2,000,000—almost as much as Birmingham, considerably more than Sheffield or Leeds, nearly double Newcastle-on-Tyne, Cardiff, Bristol, and Bradford, and more than twice that of Nottingham, Hull, and West Ham. It is more than any of the proposed areas in the Schedule, with the exception of Kensington, and that only exceeds it by a very small amount. The district has a night population of 60,000, but you must bear in mind the character of the district and the fact that the day population is four or five times larger. Even its population of 60,000, however, is more than that of such large towns as Barrow-in-Furness, Bath, Coventry, Devonport, Hastings, West Bromwich, and Oxford. The borough has all the requisites necessary for a municipality. It has an excellent town hall in the centre of the district, two sets of public baths and washhouses, a public library, and a riverside wharf, and at the present moment a dust destructor is in course of erection. My noble friend (the Earl of Onslow), during the Second Reading Debate, was rather inclined to disagree with the statement that the opinion and wishes of the inhabitants were against the creation of the borough proposed in this schedule. The noble Earl spoke of one public meeting which was sparsely attended. That meeting took place before I returned to London after Easter, and therefore I can only speak with regard to it from inquiries I have made. I find that there were four public meetings held in the Strand borough, and I imagine that it was the first of these to which the noble Lord alluded. This meeting took place on the 28th of March of this year. It was called somewhat in a hurry, with only two days' notice. At the second meeting, which was held in the St. Martin's Vestry Hall on 11th April, the room was filled, and the resolution against the creation of this borough was carried with only two dissentients. The third meeting was held in St. Martin's Town Hall on the afternoon of 14th April. I am sure your Lordships will appreciate the difficulty of getting a meeting together in a district like the Strand in the afternoon; but, notwithstanding this difficulty, there were over 200 persons present. The

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fourth meeting was also held at the Town Hall, on 25th April, when the room was filled and the resolution passed unanimously. I think that shows clearly what the opinion of the inhabitants is. I ought to add, that the majority were not members of the vestry. I am told that, though there were some of the officials and members of the vestry present, by far the greater number were not officially connected. I mention this because the noble Earl rather deprecated much weight being attached to the expression of opinion of the present vestries, in which I scarcely think he can have spoken seriously, seeing not only that he has done good service himself on one of them, but that it is to the present vestries that we shall look for our future councillors, the members of the new bodies proposed by this measure. What the Strand borough says in effect to Westminster is: "*Divide et impera.*" Leave us alone to manage our own affairs, and retain the rest of the old Borough of Westminster, which has a rateable value of £3,000,000, which surely will establish a great and important municipality of Westminster. I thank your Lordships for the kind attention you have paid to the remarks I have made, and I earnestly hope the Government will be able to accept the Amendment, believing that it will greatly improve the Bill, that it meets with the approval of the great majority of those concerned, and that it will conduce largely to better government, and economical administration in these districts.

Amendment moved,

"In the First Schedule, page 20, line 29, to leave out from 'The area of the' to the end of line 33, and insert 'parishes of Saint Margaret and Saint John, Westminster, and the parish of Saint George, Hanover Square. The area of the parish of Saint James, Westminster, the parish of Saint Martin-in-the-Fields, and the district of the Strand Board of Works.'"—(*The Lord Hawkesbury.*)

LORD HOBHOUSE: My Lords, as a vestryman of St. George's, I beg to support the Amendment. I do not wish to conceal my apprehension that those who build very sanguine hopes on the re-arrangement that will be effected by this Bill will, so far as the regions I know best are concerned, be considerably disappointed. I quite agree that to give substantial power and to lay responsibilities upon men is the way to appeal to the

most honourable of all ambitions—namely, the ambition to give free service to a man's neighbours; but I do not think the enlargement of areas and the alteration of names will have that effect, unless with it you enlarge the powers which you confer upon the body you are dealing with. You may make Westminster as large and as rich as you please, you may call it a borough or a city, you may unite its vestries and call them a council, you may give to their members the title of councillors and aldermen, and to the chairman the title of mayor; but unless with all that you give a larger range of power, I, for one, believe that you will not attract a different class of men to the new bodies. It will be the men who prefer show to substance who will be attracted, and that is not the class which infuses vigour into municipal or any other affairs. This Bill does not profess to give a larger range of power. In fact, nothing can prevent Westminster, large and rich as you may make it, being only one fragment of the much larger and richer community that encircles it on every side, and therefore the Bill does not profess to give any materially different range of power to that which the vestries now exercise. Just consider what this Bill is going to do. The number of houses in the parish of St. George's is 11,000, the rateable value is £2,000,000, and we have a body of 120 men to administer the affairs of the parish. If your Lordships will bear with me for a few minutes, I should like to give you some idea of the sort of work which our vestry does by its committees, and I will take as a specimen the committee which deals with valuation and assessment matters. Their duty is to keep the assessed or recorded value of the houses in the parish in accord with their real value. The importance of that duty is manifest when you understand that this is the basis of all local taxation, not merely parochial, but for income-tax, house duty, water rate, and other purposes. The necessity for that work to be done by men of intelligence and integrity, possessing an adequate knowledge of detail, is evident, and it is also important that the community should be satisfied that it is well done. As regards the greater number of houses, the value does not shift much from year to year, or from one quinquennial period to another, but the duty of the Committee is

always to be watching for alterations of various kinds, and this work involves a great deal of labour. I will not lead your Lordships into intricate questions of assessment, but I make this broad assertion, that the value of the houses in our parish is ascertained in the first instance, and, as to almost every one of them, in the last instance, by the agency of volunteer workers who are elected by the parishioners for that purpose. Of course, there are other committees whose duties are equally laborious, but I have taken this one as an illustration of the work which it is desirable to have well done. The Bill proposes to join to St. George's an area containing 12,000 houses, with a rateable value of £3,000,000. At the same time, it is proposed to reduce the number of the working body by one-fifth. This will necessitate the greater amount of the work connected with the administration of the area being done by paid officers, whose work is never so good as that of volunteers. I believe that even the area suggested by my noble friend's Amendment would be too large to work satisfactorily, but it is, at least, better than the one which increases the population of the parish by 125 per cent., and the rateable value by 150 per cent., and at the same time reduces the working body by one-fifth.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: My Lords, the argument of the noble Lord who has just sat down appears to me to be mainly directed against the principle of the Bill, or, at all events, to be more directed against the principle of the Bill than against the particular proposal we are now considering. The noble Lord says that this proposal will not enhance the dignity, or increase the power, of the bodies to whom the municipal government of London is entrusted, and that, therefore, it will not in the end attract to that government the service of the ablest men. Well, my Lords, that is an argument against the measure altogether, and it does not appear to me to apply particularly to the proposal we are now considering. The noble Lord has urged, as a reason for his Amendment, the great size of the municipal borough which we propose to create; but, considering the variety of interests affected, I think the proposal has met with a remarkable amount of acquiescence, if it cannot be called enthusiasm. The noble Lord said he believed

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a great majority of the ratepayers were opposed to the proposal. It is somewhat remarkable that all the three Members who represent in Parliament the districts which will be included in this Bill are warm supporters of the proposal. If the statement of the noble Lord were true, these Members must be remarkably and unusually indifferent to the wishes of their constituents if they have not thought it necessary to make any protest against this proposal. They have, on the contrary, warmly supported it. The noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Kimberley), on the Second Reading of the Bill, said he could not conceive what had induced us to make this proposal. I admit that the reasons which have induced the Government to make this proposal are, to a certain extent, reasons which may be described as of a sentimental character. We do not contend that the area which is to be included in this municipal borough ever possessed municipal government of the character which we propose by this measure to confer upon it, but although the City of Westminster has not possessed municipal government of this kind, it has, as the noble Lord who moved the Amendment said, a history which is intimately connected with the history of England, and although electoral and municipal legislation of modern date has done its best to terminate that history, and although there is no possibility at present of restoring to it the political unity which it once possessed, yet we have thought that it was not an unworthy idea to recognise in the ancient Parliamentary borough of the City of Westminster an area which might fitly receive municipal incorporation. We do not consider that the great size or the great wealth of the proposed area are necessarily any disqualification for incorporation, or for the distinction which we propose to confer upon it. The population which will be contained within this borough is not larger than the population of some of our great municipal boroughs at present in existence, and when the noble Lord who last spoke endeavoured to argue that the work which was now done by the Vestry of St. George's could not possibly be properly done when a smaller body was entrusted with the same functions over a much larger area, I would ask him whether the business of the great municipal boroughs of Birmingham, Liverpool, and Manchester, whose affairs

are all carried on by a municipal corporation of a similar character to that which we propose to establish, is conducted in an inferior manner to that of the Vestry of St. George's. It is true, I believe, that this borough, although it will not have a larger population, will have a larger rateable value than any other municipal borough in the kingdom, but I do not know that the possession of great wealth and of great resources necessarily adds to the difficulties and labours of municipal administration. It certainly has been no part of our design to provide that all these municipalities should be on a dead level of equality, equally overshadowed by the London County Council. It does not appear to us that there will be any disadvantage in the City of London on the one hand, through the possession of its antiquity, its great wealth, and its historical traditions, and the City of Westminster on the other hand, by its wealth and by its historic associations, being placed in a position in which they may assume, as we think it is not unlikely they will assume, a sort of leadership among these newly-created municipalities, and in which they may be able to give an example, as from their great resources they will be very well able to do, of the benefits which it may be possible for a great and well-governed municipality to confer upon its inhabitants. Reasons of this character, my Lords, have induced us to make this proposal, and I certainly am not aware that there has been, on the part of any great body of the inhabitants of the parishes which it is proposed to incorporate in this area, any manifestation of strong opposition to the proposal of the Government.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: I certainly never thought I should have lived

to hear the noble Duke advocate a measure on sentimental grounds. I could not help feeling at first that it must be due to a dearth of real argument in favour of this measure. I was quite relieved when what I imagined to be the true ground was afterwards allowed to peep out. In point of fact, I can see exactly that what we have all suspected is the true ground. The noble Duke said they did not wish that the areas in London should be so constructed as to be equally overshadowed by the London County Council. That is the reason for the Bill. He further developed it by saying that this great area would assume a kind of captaincy over the other areas. That is to say, this huge borough of Westminster will put itself at the head of the various other newly-created municipalities in London for the purpose of overshadowing the county council, and diminishing its powers. I always thought that was the object of the Bill, and now I know it. I am not insensible to the antiquity of the ancient City of Westminster, and the great interests which, for many reasons, attach to it, but a sentimental argument may be pushed too far when it is used for creating a body which for administrative purposes will not be as convenient as if there had been a division of area. This new borough is to be created for the purpose of minimising the county council and of detracting from its utility and power, and I shall therefore give this proposal my strenuous opposition.

On Question, "Whether the words proposed to be left out shall stand part of the schedule,"

Their Lordships divided:—Contents, 74; Not-Contents, 22.

CONTENTS.

Halsbury, E. (*L. Chancellor.*)
Devonshire, D. (*L. President.*)
Cross, V. (*L. Privy Seal.*)

Grafton, D.
Marlborough, D.
Northumberland, D.
Westminster, D.

Ailesbury, M.
Bristol, M.
Lansdowne, M.
Salisbury, M.

Ancaster, E.
Camperdown, E.
Carnwath, E.
Coventry, E.
Dartmouth, E.
Dartrey, E.
Denbigh, E.
Dundonald, E.
Egerton, E.
Hardwicke, E.
Lichfield, E.
Mansfield, E.
Morley, E.

Nelson, E.
Northbrook, E.
Onslow, E.
Portsmouth, E.
Ravensworth, E.
Rosse, E.
Selborne, E.
Shaftesbury, E.
Vane, E. (*M. Londonderry.*)
Waldegrave, E. [*Teller.*]
Yarborough, E.

Falkland, V.

Knutsford, V.	Cranworth, L.	Llangattock, L.
Llandaff, V.	Crawshaw, L.	Middleton, L.
Winchester, L. Bp.	Crofton, L.	Monckton, L. (<i>V. Galway</i>)
Ashcombe, L.	De Mauley, L.	Morris, L.
Balfour, L.	Dunleath, L.	Norton, L.
Belper, L.	Farnham, L.	Penrhyn, L.
Brougham and Vaux, L.	Forester, L.	Shute, L. (<i>V. Barrington.</i>)
Calthorpe, L.	Glanusk, L.	Sinclair, L.
Churchill, L. [<i>Teller.</i>]	Harlech, L.	Southampton, L.
Clonbrock, L.	Harris, L.	Sudley, L. (<i>E. Arran.</i>)
Colchester, L.	Hood of Avalon, L.	Teynham, L.
Cottesloe, L.	James, L.	Tredegar, L.
	Kintore, L. (<i>E. Kintore.</i>)	
	Lawrence, L.	

NOT-CONTENTS.

Northampton, M.	Gordon, V. (<i>E. Aberdeen.</i>)	Kinnaird, L.
Ripon, M.		Leigh, L.
Buckinghamshire, E.	Aberdare, L.	Lingen, L.
Carrington, E.	Barnard, L.	Monkswell, L.
Chesterfield, E. [<i>Teller.</i>]	Boyle, L. (<i>E. Cork and</i>	Reay, L.
Crewe, E.	<i>Ortery.</i>)	Ribblesdale, L. [<i>Teller.</i>]
Kimberley, E.	Burghclere, L.	Welby, L.
Spencer, E.	Hawkesbury, L.	
	Holhouse, L.	

Bill to be read 3^a To-morrow.

SUMMARY JURISDICTION ACT (1879) AMENDMENT BILL.

House in Committee (according to Order): Bill reported without Amendment; and re-committed to the Standing Committee.

EDUCATION OF CHILDREN BILL.

House in Committee (according to Order): Bill reported without Amendment; and re-committed to the Standing Committee.

ISOLATION HOSPITALS (AMENDMENT) BILL [Lords].

Read 3^a (according to Order); Amendments made; Bill passed, and sent to the Commons.

House adjourned at a quarter-past Seven of the clock, till To-morrow half-past Ten of the clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 3rd July, 1899.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [Lords].

Standing Orders not previously inquired into complied with.

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, that, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First

Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz. :—

HASTINGS HARBOUR BILL [Lords]. WOLVERHAMPTON CORPORATION BILL [Lords].

Ordered, that the Bills be read a second time.

PROVISIONAL ORDER BILLS [Lords].

Standing Orders applicable thereto complied with.

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, that, in the case of the following Bills, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders which are applicable thereto have been complied with, viz. :—

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 14) BILL [Lords].

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 15) BILL [Lords].

GAS AND WATER ORDERS CONFIRMA- TION BILL [Lords].

GAS ORDERS CONFIRMATION (No. 1) BILL [Lords].

WATER ORDERS CONFIRMATION BILL [Lords].

Ordered, that the Bills be read a second time to-morrow.

FISHGUARD WATER AND GAS BILL.

Lords' Amendments considered, and agreed to.

BURY CORPORATION BILL [Lords].

BURY CORPORATION WATER BILL [Lords].

Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

CHURCH STRETTON WATER BILL [Lords].

As amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time.

GREAT YARMOUTH PIER BILL [Lords].

As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

LIVERPOOL OVERHEAD RAILWAY BILL [Lords].

As amended, considered; an Amendment made; Bill to be read the third time.

ST. NEOTS WATER BILL [Lords].

As amended, considered; an Amendment made; Bill to be read the third time.

WARRINGTON CORPORATION BILL.

As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

ABERDEEN JOINT PASSENGER STATION BILL [Lords].

CALEDONIAN RAILWAY (GENERAL POWERS) BILL [Lords].

MANCHESTER CORPORATION TRAMWAYS BILL [Lords].

SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE TRAMWAYS BILL [Lords].

OWENS COLLEGE, MANCHESTER, BILL [Lords].

WOLVERHAMPTON TRAMWAYS BILL [Lords].

Read a second time, and committed.

MERSEY DOCKS AND HARBOUR BOARD (FINANCE) BILL [Lords] [STAMP DUTIES].

Committee to consider of authorising the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board to enter into agreements with the Inland Revenue for the composition of transfers of their stocks (Queen's Recommendation signified), upon Wednesday.—(*Dr. Farquharson.*)

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE TRAMWAYS AND IMPROVEMENT BILL.

Motion made, and Question proposed—

"That the Order of the House of 14th April, 1899, That, in the case of Bills reported from the Committee on Police and Sanitary Regulations, three days shall intervene between the date when the Report of the Committee is circulated with the Votes and the Consideration of the Bill, be suspended in the case of the Newcastle-upon-Tyne Tramways and Improvement Bill."—(*Dr. Farquharson.*)

MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith): We ought to have some explanation as to why the Standing Orders are to be suspended.

DR. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.): Both Bills came down late from the Police and Sanitary Committee, and it is important that there should be no further delay in order to get the Bills through before the end of the session.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe): That is an explanation to a certain extent, but why did the Bills go to the Police and Sanitary Committee late? We have every day the Standing Orders suspended in the most extraordinary fashion. I hope the hon. Gentleman will satisfy himself as to the expediency of suspending the Standing Orders in each case and give the House an assurance of the necessity thereof.

Question put, and agreed to.

Ordered, That Standing Orders 84, 214, 215, and 239 be suspended, and that the Bill be now taken into consideration provided amended prints shall have been previously deposited.—(*Dr. Farquharson.*)

Bill, as amended, considered accordingly.

Ordered, That Standing Orders 223 and 243 be suspended, and that the Bill be now read the third time.—(*Dr. Farquharson.*)

(Queen's Consent signified).—Bill read the third time accordingly, and passed.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 5) BILL.

Lords Amendments considered, and agreed to.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 17) BILL.

Read the third time, and passed.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 10) BILL.

As amended, considered; read the third time, and passed.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 11) BILL [Lords].

Read a second time, and committed.

OLDHAM CORPORATION BILL [Lords].

Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and be printed.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Mr. Halsey reported from the Committee of Selection that they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice and Legal Procedure: Sir George Fardell, Mr. Gedge, and Captain Norton; and had appointed in substitution Mr. Evelyn Cecil, Mr. William Jones, and Mr. Arthur Morton. Mr. Halsey further reported from the Committee that they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping and Manufactures: Sir Edward Hill and Sir James Rankin; and had appointed in substitution Mr. Galloway and Mr. Gedge.

Reports to lie upon the Table.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to: Shirebrook and District Gas Bill; Nottingham Corporation Bill; London, Chatham, and Dover Railway Bill; Belfast Water Bill; West Middlesex Water Bill; Central Electric Supply Bill, with Amendments.

That they have agreed to—

Amendments to—

ARDRIE AND COATBRIDGE WATER BILL [Lords].**GAINSBOROUGH URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL (GAS) BILL [Lords].****WICK AND PULTENEY HARBOURS BILL [Lords].**

Without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confirm certain Provisional

Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Tramways Act, 1870, relating to Audenshaw Urban District Tramways, Clayton Tramways, Eccles Corporation Tramways, Ilkeston Corporation Tramways, Queensbury Tramway, and Southport Corporation Tramways." [Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade, under the Tramways Act, 1870, relating to Barking Town Urban District Tramways, Blackpool Corporation Tramways, Dudley and Wolverhampton Tramways, Gravesend, Rosherville, and Northfleet Tramways, Ilford Urban District Tramways, and Wrexham District Tramways." [Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 3) Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill, intituled, "An Act to extend the time for the completion of the authorised pier and works of the Weston-super-Mare Grand Pier Company; and for other purposes." [Weston-super-Mare Grand Pier Bill [Lords].

Also a Bill intituled, "An Act for extending the limits of the borough of Workington, and for making further and better provision in regard to the water supply thereof." [Workington Corporation Bill [Lords].

And also a Bill intituled, "An Act to consolidate the parishes within the county borough of Portsmouth, and to confer further powers on the Corporation of Portsmouth; and for other purposes." [Portsmouth Corporation Bill [Lords].

TRAMWAYS ORDERS CONFIRMATION (No. 2) BILL [Lords].

Read the first time; Referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 255.]

TRAMWAYS ORDERS CONFIRMATION (No. 3) BILL [Lords].

Read the first time; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 256.]

**WESTON-SUPER-MARE GRAND PIER
BILL [Lords].**

**WORKINGTON CORPORATION BILL
[Lords].**

**PORTSMOUTH CORPORATION BILL
[Lords].**

Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.

Petition from Varteg Hill, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

**PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE
(SCOTLAND) BILL.**

Petition from Royal, Parliamentary, and Police Burghs of Scotland, for alteration, to lie upon the Table.

**PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE
(SCOTLAND) BILL.**

Petition from Dumfries, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

**SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS
ON SUNDAY BILL.**

Petitions in favour from Lyss, Driffeld, and East Liss; to lie upon the Table.

**TROUT FISHING ANNUAL CLOSE
TIME (SCOTLAND) BILL.**

Petition from Dumfries, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT.

Copy presented,—of Minute of the Committee of Council on Education, dated 29th June, 1899, modifying Articles 37, 42, and 130 (6) of the Day School Code, 1899 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

**BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (CHEDDAR
CHEESE MAKING).**

Copy presented,—of Report on the Results of Investigations into Cheddar Cheese Making, carried out on behalf of the Bath and West and Southern Counties Society, in the years 1891-8, by F. J.

Lloyd, F.C.S., F.I.C. [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

**CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD
(IRELAND).**

Copy presented,—of Eighth Report of the Board, being for the period from 1st April 1898 to 31st March 1899 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

**EAST INDIA (INDIAN CURRENCY
COMMITTEE, 1898).**

Copy presented,—of Index and Appendices to the Evidence taken before the Committee appointed to inquire into the Indian Currency [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented,—of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 2302 to 2304 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

Paper laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House.

LAND TRANSFER RULES.

Copy of the Land Transfer Rules, June 1899 [by Act].

**NEW WRIT FOR ST. PANCRAS (EAST
DIVISION).**

In the room of Robert Grant Webster, Esq. (Chiltern Hundreds).—(*Sir William Walrond.*)

**NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY
(CORRESPONDENCE).**

Return ordered, "of copy of correspondence recently passed between the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury and the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the National Portrait Gallery, relative to the acquisition of historical portraits by the National Portrait Gallery."—(*Mr. Lecky.*)

QUESTIONS.

SPECIAL ENLISTMENTS.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he can state the number of men now serving, with more than three months' service, who were specially enlisted below the standard as to age and measurements and who, although they

have not attained the standard required for enlistment under ordinary circumstances, are counted as effective soldiers; and whether he can state the standard of measurements for these "specials" in the infantry arm of the service.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): From the figures given in paragraph 30 of the Report of the Inspector-General of Recruiting it appears that on the 1st January there were in the army at home, 2,563 men of more than three months' service who were specially enlisted and had not then reached the standard. There is no separate standard for special enlistments. Only those men are so enlisted who are likely to reach the general standard.

SCOTLAND AND THE MILITARY WORKS EXPENDITURE.

SIR JOHN LENG (Dundee): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War what portion of the £1,306,000 required under the War Office scheme for defence works will be spent in Scotland, and whether such works are contemplated on the Firths of Forth and Tay as well as on the Dee and Clyde.

*MR. WYNDHAM: As I stated to the House in introducing the Military Works Loan Resolution, the Secretary of State does not consider it expedient to give any details in respect of the proposed defence works.

COMMANDS AT DEFENCE STATIONS—MAJOR GRANT, R.E.

SIR J. COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War when the Secretary for War decided that at places where important building works, necessitating heavy expenditure of public money, are under consideration, it is desirable that the senior officer should belong to the Royal Engineers. Whether, before such decision was arrived at, the probable effects of thus securing for the officer charged with advising and supervising expenditure absolute freedom from local supervision and control by independent military authority on the spot was fully considered. And whether it is intended to apply this rule to all places, such as Bermuda, Jamaica, and Mauritius, named in the Schedule of the Military Works Bill, by conferring on the Royal Engineer

officer at each of those stations local rank superior to that of his present commanding officer, as has already been done at Esquimalt under this rule.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The decision referred to by my hon. and gallant friend has reference to the case of Esquimalt only. The appointment of Major Grant, with local rank, was considered in all its bearings. My reply of the 12th May did not cite a rule, but explained that one officer of the Royal Engineers had been appointed to succeed another in the command of Esquimalt.

SIR J. COLOMB: Does the rule apply only to Esquimalt?

*MR. WYNDHAM: It is not a rule. What I said was that at Esquimalt a Royal Engineer officer has heretofore been in command, and he is to be succeeded by another.

CASTLE MOFFAT CAMP.

SIR JOHN LENG: On behalf of the hon. Member for Leith Burghs, I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he can state why the camp that was arranged at Castle Moffat, near Dunbar, has been abandoned.

*MR. WYNDHAM: The manoeuvres had to be abandoned because the site available for the camp was found to be within the catchment area of the North Berwick water supply.

THE CARNOUSTIE GOLF LINKS.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR (Forfarshire): I beg to ask the Under Secretary for War, to whom I have given private notice of the question, whether he has any information as to interference by the military authorities on Saturday last with the playing of golf on the golf links at Carnoustie, which are the property of the borough; and whether he will take steps to prevent such interference in future.

*MR. WYNDHAM: A telegram has been sent to the General Officer Commanding calling for a report. If the hon. Member will repeat his question on a later day I shall be able to give him some information.

RAIPUR—ZEMINDARS' GRIEVANCES.

MR. J. H. ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India will he explain why no reply has

yet been given by the Government of India in reference to the memorials presented by Lal Brijraj Sinh and other zemindars of Khariar, in the district of Raipur, praying for redress of grievances; and whether, in view of the long delay which has taken place, he will cause immediate inquiry to be made into the matter.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): I am informed by the Government of India that orders on their memorial were communicated to the Khariar and other zemindars of Raipur on the 14th of last month.

WEI-HAI-WEI.

SIR J. COLOMB: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the delimitations of the boundary at Wei-hai-wei, dividing Chinese territory under the influence of Germany from that leased to Great Britain, has been completed; whether it reserves for British occupation all land necessary for securing the command of the harbour and the Island of Leu Kung; and what, approximately, is the length of the boundary and the extent of the territorial area reserved for British occupation on the mainland.

***THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR** (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): Full particulars with regard to the boundary of Wei-hai-wei are contained in the Convention of July 1st, 1898, which has been presented to Parliament, Treaty Series No. 14, 1898. I think my hon. and gallant friend's second question should be addressed to the Admiralty.

MURDER OF A BRITISH MISSIONARY AT KWEI-CHAN.

MR. J. H. ROBERTS: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he will state whether any definite arrangement has yet been arrived at between the British Government and the Tsung-li-Yamèn as to the capture and execution of the headman who is principally responsible for the murder of Mr. Fleming, British missionary at Kwei-Chan; whether the representative of the British Government has demanded the dismissal of the governor of the province where the murder was committed, and that this demand has been refused by the

Chinese Government; and what course the Government intend to pursue under the circumstances.

***MR. BRODRICK:** Her Majesty's Government have demanded the dismissal of the Governor of Kwei-Chan in the event of his failure to arrest the headman of the village where the murder was committed, but in view of the capture and execution of two out of the three who were concerned in the crime, they have agreed to extend the limit of time fixed by Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Peking for the apprehension of the headman.

THE PEACE CONFERENCE.

MR. STANHOPE (Burnley): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is in a position to deny the report current in Germany that the opposition manifested to the proposals for compulsory arbitration at the Peace Conference at The Hague proceeds from the instructions and action of the representatives of Great Britain.

***MR. BRODRICK:** In view of the agreement arrived at that no disclosures should be made of the proceedings at the Conference beyond the authorised communications made to the Press, Her Majesty's Government are unable to give information in regard to the action of the British representatives at the Peace Conference. But the policy of this country in regard to arbitration is sufficiently well known from previous negotiations and public declarations.

TRANSVAAL AFFAIRS.

MR. H. S. FOSTER (Suffolk, Lowestoft): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can state to the House the nature of the most recent proposals of the Transvaal Government for conferring the franchise on the Uitlanders, and in what respect they substantially differ from the recommendations which Sir Alfred Milner communicated to President Kruger at the recent Conference.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): I stated to the House on the 6th of June the substance of President Kruger's proposals with regard to the franchise at the recent Conference. The project of law subsequently submitted

to, and approved by, the Volksraad does not substantially differ from those proposals. They both substantially differ from Sir A. Milner's recommendations, communicated to President Kruger at the Conference in these respects. Under Sir A. Milner's scheme, Uitlanders who have resided in the Transvaal for five years might by becoming naturalised at once obtain the franchise, and those who subsequently complete a residence of five years might, on the expiration of that period of residence, be naturalised and obtain the franchise, while under the scheme of the Transvaal Government, no Uitlander could obtain the franchise in less than two years from the promulgation of the law, and no Uitlander who did not reside in the Transvaal before 1890 could obtain the franchise in less than five years from that time. In Sir A. Milner's scheme the franchise would be obtained on naturalisation. In the scheme of the Transvaal Government an interval of five years (or in the case of Uitlanders who resided before 1890, two years) would elapse after naturalisation, during which the naturalised Uitlander would have relinquished his rights as a citizen of his original country, and not have acquired the rights of a burgher of the South African Republic.

*MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): Will the right hon. Gentleman give the date of the proposals of the Transvaal Government to which he has just referred? Have they been superseded?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: No, the original proposal was made at the Conference by President Kruger, and the subsequent proposal, which was in the nature of a law, was submitted to the Volksraad subsequent to the Conference at Bloemfontein.

MR. H. S. FOSTER: The date?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I do not know the date, but it was some days afterwards—after the Conference.

*MR. J. E. ELLIS: Has nothing more recent reached the right hon. Gentleman?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: No, Sir. Nothing more recent than that has reached me.

MALTA.

MR. DAVITT (Mayo, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether protests have been made by representatives of the people of Malta against the decree in letters patent from the Queen proposing to abolish the use of the Italian language in the law courts of the island after a number of years shall elapse; whether, in view of the native feeling which prevails against this decree, it can be modified so as to substitute a bilingual remedy for the grievances which have induced the Colonial Office to cause the issue of the letters patent referred to; and if the bilingual custom which has worked so well in the courts in Lower Canada will be extended to Malta as an alternative to the proposed abolition of the native language in the courts of the island.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The elected members of the Council of Government of Malta have protested against an Order in Council which provides for the use of the English language in certain cases in the law courts of the island, and against a notification of the intention to substitute English for Italian as the language of the courts after the lapse of fifteen years. The native language of the Maltese is not Italian but Maltese, and only a small proportion of the population understand Italian. The English language is now being taught in the schools, and it is anticipated that in a few years it will be more acceptable than Italian to the Maltese. I have no reason to think that there is any widespread feeling against the proposal.

MR. DAVITT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the change in the representative character of the Executive Council of Malta, by which the three members of the Council formerly selected from the elected members of the Legislative Council are now the nominees of the Governor, is accepted as satisfactory to the Maltese; and can he state for what reasons this change has been sanctioned.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The change in the constitution of the Executive Council of Malta was made in 1891—before that the Executive Council included three elected members of the Council of Government nominated by the

Governor; but it was frequently found impossible to induce three elected members to accept seats in the Executive Council, and in order to prevent the work of the Council from being thus brought to a standstill the provision requiring three elected members of the Council of Government to be members of the Executive Council was repealed. In practice elected members of the Council of Government have continued to be appointed to the Executive Council when they were willing to accept seats. I have no reason to believe that there is any general objection to the change which has now been operative for eight years.

CLYDE MUSSEL BEDS.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, in view of the statement contained in the last Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland in regard to the Board's rights to certain mussel beds in the Clyde, will he state what action has been taken in the matter; and will he say whether suitable arrangements have now been made for the cultivation of those beds.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): The arrangements referred to in the last Report to the Fishery Board for Scotland in regard to the Board's rights as lessees of the Crown to certain mussel beds in the Clyde have now been completed, and an action is about to be brought in the Court of Session for a declaration to establish the title of the Crown. Until this action has been decided it is impossible to make satisfactory arrangements for the cultivation of the mussel beds in question.

UNDERSIZED FISH BILL.

SIR CAMERON GULL (Devonshire, Barnstaple): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he has any statistics to show what percentage of undersized flat fish would be preserved under the provisions of the Undersized Fish Bill, having regard to the fact that a very large proportion of such fish are destroyed in the process of hauling the trawl and sorting the catch.

MR. RITCHIE: I am advised that no reliable estimate can be made as to the percentage of flat fish, which would be preserved under the provisions of the Undersized Fish Bill. While it is, no

doubt, true that many small fish are destroyed in the way suggested by the hon. Baronet, I may point out that it is anticipated that one effect of the Bill will be to deter trawlers from visiting certain grounds where small fish are known to abound, and where fish of the standard size are scarce. The Bill, moreover, would prevent the sale in this country of undersized fish, which are, I understand, at the present time imported from those foreign countries in which their sale is by law prohibited.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (King's Lynn): Has the right hon. Gentleman any grounds for the belief that any fish at all will be preserved by this Bill?

MR. RITCHIE: That goes without saying.

*MR. J. LOWTHER (Kent, Isle of Thanet): Has the right hon. Gentleman no knowledge that the bulk of any such fish would be found to be dead in the net?

MR. RITCHIE: No doubt, Sir. That is true with regard to certain trawlers, but my point is, as stated, that if this Bill is passed into an Act this class of trawler would not frequent those areas where small fish are numerous and large fish scarce.

MR. H. S. FOSTER: Can the right hon. Gentleman indicate any particular cases where that would occur?

No answer was given.

CYCLES CARRIED ON RAILWAYS.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will endeavour to obtain from the principal railway companies of Great Britain, and lay before Parliament in the form of a Return, a statement of the number of cycles carried by each of those companies during the year 1898, and of the annual sum of money received by them in respect of the carriage of such cycles.

MR. RITCHIE: I will communicate with the Railway Association, and see what can be done to meet the wishes of the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. BRYCE: Will there be any objection to presenting it in the form of a Return?

MR. RITCHIE: No; but I must make sure I can get it in a complete form first.

METROPOLITAN POLICE FORCE.

CAPTAIN NORTON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can state the proportion of married to single men in the Metropolitan Police Force; and whether, if the men who have recently joined are not influenced to leave the service by the prospect of having to pay high house rent when they marry, he can state to what cause he attributes the increase in the number of short service men who now leave every week.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Sir M. WHITE RIDLEY, Lancashire, Blackpool): There are 11,673 married men in the Force, equivalent to 75 per cent. of the total strength. The extraordinarily satisfactory state of the unskilled labour market is, in my opinion, quite sufficient to account for the number, which is in no way abnormal, of short service men who leave the Force.

VACCINATION.

MR. LOGAN (Leicestershire, Harborough): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if it is intended by his Department that the public vaccinator's visit and offer to vaccinate, under Section 1, Sub-section 3, of the Vaccination Act, 1898, shall take the place of the opportunity afforded by the vaccination stations now abolished, and such visit and offer to vaccinate be made before any proceedings are instituted against persons who became defaulters since the 1st of January, 1899.

THE SECRETARY TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, Tyrone, S.): I am advised that in the case of any child who has attained the age of six months since the 31st December last, the public vaccinator must visit and offer to vaccinate before any proceedings are instituted in respect of the non-vaccination of the child.

SMALL HOUSES BILL.

MR. BILL (Staffordshire, Leek): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he could state to the House what is the total number and population of the urban and rural districts, including non-county boroughs,

with a population above 7,000, which will or may be excluded from the jurisdiction of the county councils under the Small Houses Bill as now proposed to be amended by the Government; and, what is the total number and population of the remaining districts.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: The total number of districts referred to in the first paragraph of the question is 892, with a population of 13,707,696. The number of the remaining districts is 832, with a population of 3,179,630.

TITHE RENT-CHARGE (RATES) BILL.

MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture what are the statutes which authorise payments to clergymen in lieu of tithe, who will be benefited by Sub-section 2 of Clause 2 of the Tithe Rent-charge (Rates) Bill; and, to what places will that provision apply.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. LONG, Liverpool, West Derby): So far as the payments in lieu of tithe referred to in Clause 2 of the Bill are specifically settled by the Statute, they consist for the most part of the rent-charges given under private Acts of Parliament, and whether they are rateable or not depends on the terms of the Acts under which they are paid. In these circumstances it is impracticable for me to specify the statutes and places to which the clause applies.

TELEGRAPHS (TELEPHONIC COMMUNICATION, &c.) BILL.

MR. KIMBER (Wandsworth): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, if he, or the Post Office, or any other Government Department, has made any estimate of the probable return which the State will obtain on the expenditure of the two millions of money in competition with the National Telephone Company, and of its effect on the royalties of £114,000 a year now receivable from the company; whether, for comparison therewith, any estimate has been made of the probable return which would be obtained at once if the company were extinguished, or converted into a State Department, and its capital converted into a stock with a limited interest of 3 per cent.; if so, will he lay a copy of

such estimate before this House; and, if no such estimates have been made, will he cause them to be prepared; and, will he also lay a copy of the proposed new arrangements with the Telephone Company before the House, and not merely to the Members of the Standing Committee.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HANBURY, Preston): The two millions are intended partly for the provinces and partly for London. So far as the provinces are concerned the expenditure will be chiefly in places where this company is not now working, or where there is already competition between it and the Post Office. No question of royalty arises in such cases. In London, where there will be competition with the National Telephone Company, even if the rates of the Company, and therefore the royalty, are reduced, this reduction will, it is anticipated, be more than balanced by the increased number of subscribers. The answer to the second paragraph is in the negative. The proposed new arrangements have already been laid before the House in the usual printed notices.

KILKENNY POSTMAN'S PAY.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster-General, whether he is aware that a postman named Jackson, in Kilkenny, has been in the Post Office service over twenty years, and that his wages at present are only 12s. per week; and whether Jackson was given the increment of 1s. 6d. per year fixed by the new wages scale, which came into operation in April, 1897, on the recommendation of the Tweedmouth Committee; and, if not, whether he will cause inquiry to be made into the case, with the view of giving Jackson the wages to which he is entitled by the rules of the service.

MR. HANBURY: The rural postman at Kilkenny to whom the hon. Member refers was transferred on the 19th ultimo to another walk at that place, carrying wages of 16s. a week. His previous duty was not sufficient to warrant higher wages than 12s. a week.

LAND IMPROVEMENT LOANS IN ROSCOMMON.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: On behalf of the hon. Member for South Roscommon,

I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that the fact that the Board of Works Inspector (Land Improvement Branch) for a great portion of the County of Roscommon resides at Enniskillen, in the County of Fermanagh, far distant from Roscommon, is the cause of grave inconvenience to applicants for loans, inasmuch as the inspector does not sometimes visit the farms for upwards of a month after the claims are filed and the fee paid at the Works Office, Dublin; and whether he will cause some change to be made for the better accommodation of the public.

MR. HANBURY: The district of the Land Loans Inspector who is stationed at Enniskillen does not include any portion of the County of Roscommon. The inspection of land loans in Roscommon is performed by inspectors stationed at Ballinasloe and Mullingar.

THE ACCOUNTANT-GENERAL OF THE POST OFFICE.

MR. H. S. FOSTER: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster-General, whether Mr. Cardin, the Comptroller and Accountant-General of the Post Office, has attained the existing regulations as to retirement the age of sixty; and if so, whether, under at that age, it is proposed to retain his services.

MR. HANBURY: Mr. Cardin has attained the age of sixty, and the Postmaster-General intends to retain his services.

THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury who is now responsible for the printing of *The Parliamentary Debates*; and whether Mr. George Walpole, who is described as editor and manager, is an official of the Stationery Office, or has an independent position.

MR. HANBURY: Messrs. Wyman and Sons, Limited, are now responsible for printing *The Parliamentary Debates*, a contract for "Printing and Publishing Reports of Debates and Proceedings in Parliament" having been granted to them on the same general lines as that until lately held by Mr. Bussy. The editor and manager is not an official of the Stationery Office, but an employee of Messrs. Wyman.

MR. BARTLEY: I shall call attention to this on the Estimates, and move a Resolution.

SCOTTISH CONGESTED DISTRICTS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he will state whether the circular letter sent out some time since by the Secretary for Scotland to landlords in the Highland and Islands of Scotland has resulted in offers of land to the Congested Districts Board.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): Some replies have been received, but no useful information on the subject can be given at present.

PORT NESS HARBOUR WORKS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he will state what progress has been made with the harbour works at Port Ness (Island of Lewis); and whether the sand has yet been removed from the harbour.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: The breakwater of the Port Ness Harbour is completed. The sand has not been removed from the harbour, and the rest of the works remain in the same state as when the hon. Member last inquired about them.

MR. WEIR: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that in consequence of the harbour being filled with sand it is utterly useless to the fishermen?

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I do not think there are any facts which are unknown. The hon. Member is as well aware as I am of the real reason for the state of the harbour.

MR. WEIR: Will any steps be taken to render the harbour useful to fishermen?

(No answer was given.)

SCOTTISH FISHERY CRUISER.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate, having regard to the fact that the Fishery Board for Scotland some time since decided to obtain another cruiser, and that the requisite funds have already been allocated to the Board, will he state why no steps have yet been taken in the matter.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I have nothing at present to add to the

reply I gave to the hon. Member on the 23rd ultimo to a similar question.

MR. WEIR: I shall call attention to this matter on the Estimates.

BEE-KEEPING IN SCOTLAND.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate, having regard to the fact that the question of encouraging bee-keeping in the congested area of the Highlands and Islands of Scotland has been under the consideration of the Congested Districts Board for upwards of a year, will he state what steps have been taken in the matter.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I am informed by the Congested Districts Board that considerable difficulty has been encountered in getting properly qualified persons in suitable places within congested districts to take an interest in bee-keeping. Some fully-equipped hives of the most approved pattern have been sent as an experiment to the Island of Coll, where the schoolmaster has kindly undertaken to have them distributed and supervised. Should the results of this experiment justify them, the Board contemplate a further extension of operations.

MINOR LIGHTS ON THE SCOTTISH COAST.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate, in view of the statement contained on page 5 of the Report of the Congested District Board, dated 20th October, 1898, in regard to the maintenance of minor lights erected under the Highlands and Islands Works Vote, will he state whether steps have been taken by the Scottish Office to secure the requisite funds from the Treasury, so that these lights may not fall into decay.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: The matter referred to remains in the same position as it was in at the date of the publication of the report referred to.

MR. WEIR: Has the Scotch Office taken any steps to secure funds for the proper maintenance of these lights?

(No answer was given.)

JUDICIAL RENTS IN COUNTY CLARE.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what is the cause of the delay in fixing judicial rents

in the Killadysert district, County Clare ; and why the Commissioners do not hold a court in the town of Killadysert.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. G. W. BALFOUR, Leeds, Central) : With the exception of a short interval of a couple of months, a sub-commission has been constantly employed for close on two years in the disposal of cases from County Clare. It has been the practice to include cases from all the unions in the county in each list issued, so that cases from the Union of Killadysert are in as advanced a stage of disposal as those from the other unions. A fresh list for the entire county will be issued when the present list has been completed. There are only seventy-two cases from the union referred to awaiting hearing. The sub-commissions sit in such places as are most convenient for all parties interested, and if at a future time a large number of cases from the vicinity of Killadysert is listed for hearing, the question of sitting at that place will be fully considered.

IRISH COUNTY SURVEYORSHIPS.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.) : I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that in the examinations for county surveyorships in Ireland only 140 marks out of a total of 1,000 are allotted to county works including architecture ; and whether he will suggest the desirability of paying greater attention to subjects directly connected with the duties of the surveyors in conformity with the practice pursued by the Incorporated Association of Municipal and County Engineers in England.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR : The fact is as stated in the first paragraph. The examinations for county surveyorships in Ireland will no longer be conducted on the system of open competitions, as formerly. No marks will be assigned to the separate subjects, and the examination will henceforward be directed solely to ascertain that each candidate has attained such a standard of proficiency on the whole programme of subjects prescribed as will satisfy the Civil Service Commissioners.

CAPTAIN DONELAN : Do I understand that such subjects as chemistry, experimental geology and mineralogy are no longer to be included ?

MR. G. W. BALFOUR : I am not aware that they are included now.

BELFAST HARBOUR.

MR. MACALEESE (Monaghan, N.) : I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that great risk and loss of life takes place because of the exposed and unfenced state of the Belfast Harbour ; that coroners' juries have time after time censured the negligence of the Harbour Commissioners in this respect ; and that the Belfast City Council has made representations to the Commissioners on the subject ; and will he communicate with the Harbour Commissioners requiring their attention to the matter.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR : On the 31st of March, 1898, the hon. Member was informed that the Government had called the attention of the Harbour Commissioners to the alleged unprotected state of the docks, and on the 26th of the following month I informed the hon. Member for South Down of the result of the correspondence with the Commissioners. No fresh facts have been brought to my notice, and I have nothing to add to my statement on the latter date.

AGRICULTURE AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION (IRELAND) BILL.

MR. MACALEESE : I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a copy of a resolution passed unanimously by the Monaghan Rural District Council, urging the passage into law of the Agriculture and Technical Instruction Bill during the present session of Parliament ; and will he give effect to the resolution.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR : I have received a copy of the resolution referred to. I trust I may have the assistance of the hon. Member and his colleagues in passing the Bill.

MEDICAL FEES IN IRELAND. I

MR. BLAKE (Longford, S.) : I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the general provisions of the Medical Charities Act of 1851 on the subject are interfered with ; and, if so, how far by the late scale of fees which is understood to be applicable to tickets issued for medical relief to dispensary doctors ; and will he explain why

changes in this respect have been made in the old system.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: This question appears to refer to Article 7 of the Dispensary Rules. But that Article does not interfere with the provisions of the Medical Charities Act. On the 8th of March last the Local Government Board issued to the local authorities concerned a circular which explained the operation of Article 7. The Statute does not give a definition of a "poor person," and the Board think that the fee demanded by the doctor for his services is an important factor in deciding the question.

KILMALLOCK LAND APPEALS.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can explain the delay of the Land Commission in fixing rents in the Kilmallock district, some of which are listed for hearing nearly two years; and can he say when the Commission will deal with those cases.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: The disposal of a list issued for the Kilmallock district was interrupted by the illness of an assistant commissioner. There are only sixty-seven cases from the district that have not yet been listed for hearing. The Commissioners will make arrangements for the disposal of the cases on the list referred to, as well as of those yet unlisted, as soon as possible.

AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS AND THE WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ACT.

MR. SEELY (Lincoln): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the offers now being made by insurance companies of good standing to insure farmers against the Workmen's Compensation Act at rates which would amount to 1½d. an acre or less; and whether, under those circumstances, he would give facilities for the passing of a short Act this session extending the benefits of the Workmen's Compensation Act to agricultural labourers.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (MR. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I have no information as regards the matter of fact referred to by my hon. friend in the first part of his question, though I should imagine that the rates of insurance in the case of agricultural

labourers ought to be very low indeed. As to the second part of his question, I cannot promise legislation in the course of the present session.

MAJOR RASCH (Essex, S.E.): Was not the reason given for the exclusion of the agricultural labourers that the Act was merely a tentative one?

(No answer was given.)

NEW CHANCERY JUDGE.

SIR H. H. FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, whether it is the intention of the Government to appoint an additional Judge of the Chancery Division of the High Court; and if so, in what form will the proposal be submitted for the consideration of Parliament.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand the procedure will be by motion for an address to the Crown, and that this procedure will be in pursuance of the powers given by the Appellate Jurisdiction Act, 1876.

SIR H. H. FOWLER: When will the motion be made?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot give the right hon. Gentleman any specific undertaking as to the date on which it will be taken, but I will endeavour to give as long notice as I can.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Will the name of the judge to be appointed be submitted to Parliament?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not know whether that is in conformity with precedent, but I will inquire into the matter.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I could give the right hon. Gentleman precedents.

COMMITTEE ON MUNICIPAL TRADING.

MR. COHEN (Islington, E.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, seeing that it has been found impossible this session to appoint the Joint Committee on Municipal Trading, he can give an assurance that Her Majesty's Government will appoint the Joint Committee in question early next session.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes, Sir, I have to state that I hope we shall be able to appoint the Committee to which my hon. friend refers early next session.

MR. GALLOWAY (Manchester, S.W.): Then are we to take it that the motion for the appointment of the Committee will not be proceeded with this session?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I indicated, I think, on Thursday or Friday, that time was getting on so far that there was very little hope that it would be possible to proceed this session.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. MCKENNA (Monmouthshire, N.): May I ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he proposes to take the Tithe Rent-Charge (Rates) Bill on Thursday?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes, Sir, as at present advised I shall hope to do so.

MR. J. LOWTHER: What business will be taken to-morrow?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The first Order of the day, I imagine, will be the Scotch Private Bill Procedure Bill. I say I imagine it will be, because there are certain measures which stand before it, but which, I hope, will be disposed of to-night.

ROYAL NIGER COMPANY [CONSOLIDATED FUND].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS - BEACH, Bristol, W.): In calling the attention of the Committee to the position of the Royal Niger Company and the proposals which Her Majesty's Government make with regard to the future administration of the territories now under the company's control, I shall dwell very little on the history of the past. I can remember, when I held the office of Colonial Secretary in 1880, that our interests in that part of Africa were not considered important. I think they were practically centred in what was then the unimportant and small Colony of Lagos. Since that time, and especially within the last fifteen years, those interests have, as I need hardly remind the Committee, increased to a great extent. The Niger Coast Protectorate has been established, embracing the territory which was formerly known as the Oil River, and extending from Lagos up to the German sphere of influence at the Cameroons. Very large interests inland,

on the basin of the Niger, have also been created over a vast territory by the enterprise of the founders and promoters of the Royal Niger Company. The position of affairs in the Niger basin was brought under the attention of the Government of the day before the year 1885; and, after much consideration, Lord Granville directed the preparation of a charter to that company, in May, 1885, and shortly afterwards that Government resigned. The matter was discussed by the succeeding Government, which, I think, was only in office for seven months, and afterwards by its successors. In May, 1886, it was decided to grant a charter to the Royal Niger Company, and the charter was actually issued in July of that year. Therefore the Committee will see that whatever may have been the merits—and I think they were considerable—of the policy adopted in granting a charter to a company in that region, and whether the provisions of the charter were good or not, at any rate, the policy was the policy, not of one Party alone, but of both the great Parties in the State. The charter conferred very wide powers on the Royal Niger Company. It empowered them to obtain and hold any treaty rights in the region to which it related, to trade there, and to hold land and any privileges, monopolies, and concessions from any potentate or government in Africa or elsewhere. It recognised thirty-seven treaties already made by the company with the chiefs in the Niger basin ceding territory to the company. It empowered the company to levy customs duties to be applied solely to defray the necessary expenses of government, including expenditure already incurred for administrative purposes or otherwise in relation to the maintenance, acquisition, and execution of treaty rights. The company was made in certain matters subject to the control of the Secretary of State; and there were provisions in the charter by which the Secretary of State could check their administrative accounts, and by which also it was stated that nothing in the charter should be deemed to authorise any monopoly of trade, and that the obligations of the Treaty of Berlin relating to the navigation of the Niger should be adhered to. Therefore, within this region of Africa three different kinds of British administration were established.

First, there was the Colony of Lagos under the control of the Colonial Office; secondly, there was the Niger Coast Protectorate under the Foreign Office; and, thirdly, there was the Royal Niger Company, subject only, as far as Her Majesty's Government were concerned, to the very slight control I have stated to the Committee. Perhaps it was hardly likely that these three different kinds of administration would work in harmony, and they have not done so. The Royal Niger Company set itself to the work authorised by its charter with very great energy. It did not do what is a very common thing now—it did not make its shares the subject of speculation on the Stock Exchange, nor has it become the fruitful parent of many other companies, granting concessions for various purposes, which are perhaps often of greater advantage to those who obtain them than they are to the public at large. The Royal Niger Company devoted itself to administration and trade and to the development of the great territories entrusted to its care. As a trading company it has been successful. On its paid-up capital of £500,000 it has divided amongst its shareholders 6 per cent. during each year since the charter was granted; and it has established a considerable reserve fund from its trading profits, and has applied large sums from those profits to the expenses of the administration of the territory which it incurred beyond the amount derived, under the provisions of the charter, from customs duties and other charges it was authorised to levy for the purposes of administration. But my work to-night is to deal with the administrative rather than the trading side of the company. In the work of the administration of the company, two men, I think, stand out pre-eminent—the late Lord Aberdare and Sir George Goldie. Two Secretaries of State—Lord Salisbury and Lord Kimberley—have borne testimony in the highest terms to the energy, the ability, and the resource displayed by the directors of the company, and especially by those I have named, in the work of the administration of these vast territories. Under their guidance the company extended its protectorate over an area of something like half a million square miles, with an estimated population of 30,000,000. It put down slave-raiding and massacres over a great area. It conquered the powerful Ameer of Nupé and the Sultan

of Ilorin, and took the town of Bida after an expedition with which Sir George Goldie's name will always be honourably connected. Some two or three years ago it abolished the legal status of slavery within its own jurisdiction; and it also did what I think is greatly to its honour—it checked materially that terrible curse of Africa, the trade in spirits with the natives. The company further established very valuable relations with the great empires of Sokoto and Ganda—empires which are, as compared with African tribes generally, really civilised countries. Generally speaking, I think it may fairly be said that the company has founded an empire extending over many thousands of square miles in the most valuable part of Equatorial Africa; and this has been done in sharp contrast with the neglect which successive Governments and Parliaments in this country have shown of British interests in that part of the world. I am afraid that nothing in the past is much less to our credit than the manner in which the communications and the trade with the interior of Africa have been allowed by us to be cut off from our settlements of Gambia, Sierra Leone, and even to some extent the Gold Coast. The company acted very differently. It is owing to their work, and to nothing else, that they have preserved for our commerce and for our interests the great artery of the Niger; and in dealing with the company, either now or in the future, I am confident that the work which they have done in this respect will never be forgotten by their countrymen. But, of course, there is another side of the shield. The charter had not long been granted when difficulties arose in working. Some time ago there was a difficulty with the native tribe inhabiting the Brass country within the Niger Coast Protectorate. As far as I am aware, the relations between the company and the tribes within its own territories have been excellent. But the tribes to whom I refer had been in the habit of trading freely with the interior of Africa, of passing in British goods, and of bringing African produce to the coast. When the company was necessarily authorised to establish customs regulations and a customs tariff at its boundaries, these tribes found themselves, of course, seriously hampered in their freedom of intercourse with the interior; and the result was a very dangerous rising on their part

Sir M. Hicks-Beach.

and great loss of life and property, as well as expenditure by the company, before it was put down. Then, again, the company, being bound to establish a customs tariff, had to take care that it should not be evaded by smuggling, and they had to issue certain regulations formed with that object. They made certain provisions with regard to the granting of Customs certificates, with regard to the sums which should be paid for licences to trade on the Niger, and also with regard to the places where vessels might be allowed to trade or call for fuel on the voyages up and down the river. These regulations were undoubtedly to a great extent in restriction of trading by anyone else than the members of the company, and in my opinion they were almost necessarily so. But that was their effect, and consequently grave complaints were made by other traders not connected with the company, both in this country and in France, that practically these regulations, although I believe they were found to be within the legal rights conferred on the company by its charter, did infringe the spirit of the Act of Berlin in respect of the navigation of the Niger. That was a matter of natural complaint with regard to the company. But the great difficulty that has arisen, and the real ground, to my mind, which justifies the change we propose in the position of the company, has been the rivalry in that region between France and this country. We all remember the difficult and delicate nature of the situation two years ago. We remember the strained relations—more strained, I think, sometimes than the public generally appreciated—which arose, and we are all glad that that state of things has been put an end to by the treaty recently ratified by the two Governments. But it was perfectly clear through those difficulties that, although the Chartered Company might be the best means of dealing with that region as far as the natives were concerned, it was not the proper instrument with which the obligations of this country could be performed with regard to anything affecting our civilised neighbours in Europe. The officers of the Niger Company, however able—and they have had very able servants among these officers—must have been primarily influenced by the local and the trading interests of the company they served. It was impossible for them, of course, to

consider matters from the broad point of view from which it would be the duty of Imperial officers to consider them; and, undoubtedly, if the Niger Company had been allowed a free hand in its relations with the French there would have been most grave danger of misunderstanding, and, perhaps, even of conflict, which might have led to a great and terrible war. Therefore, they were not allowed a free hand in this matter, and consequently they naturally devoted themselves to other matters within their own territory, rather than on their frontier, in which they were allowed a free hand, and the duty fell to Her Majesty's Government of taking such measures to protect the frontiers of the Niger Company as the circumstances required. The Committee will remember that we have had to organise a great West African frontier force and to send it out to those regions, with the practical result that within the territories of the company there has been established a kind of dual administration, military and civil, of Her Majesty's Government and the company, one controlling the relations with the French, and the other controlling the relations with the natives. I need not dwell on the waste and on the risk of friction which that arrangement must necessarily bring with it, and this is the main reason why we have found it necessary to terminate the state of affairs which has hitherto prevailed and to advise Her Majesty to revoke the charter of the company. On that revocation the company will be relieved of all its administrative rights, powers, and duties, and will make over to Her Majesty's Government all its treaty rights, all its land and mineral rights, whatever they may be, and however acquired; further, it will make over to the Government so much of its administrative buildings and plant as we have deemed necessary for the administration of the territory. It will be reduced in itself to the position solely of a trading company, and will be left in possession of nothing more than its trading plant, buildings, stations, wharves, and so on, which are actually at present within its occupation. I am quite sure that the Committee will feel that on this very important change being made in the position of the company it is entitled to full recognition of the position which it

has created for itself, and the rights which it has acquired in the territories covered by the charter. Those rights are very large. They are contained, I believe, in something like 300 treaties, of which, as I have said, thirty-seven were made before the charter was granted. But they also include private land rights and other rights which were not acquired by the company in virtue of the charter, and which were actually purchased out of its private trade profits. When the charter was granted the company was allowed to levy customs dues for the cost of the administration, and included in that cost was a sum representing the expenditure already incurred in relation to the maintenance, acquisition, and execution of its treaty rights. That sum was fixed as long ago as 1888 at £12,500 a year to be charged on the customs duties of the Niger territory. On that charge the company raised in order to recoup themselves for expenditure before the grant of the charter, a sum of £250,000, which is the debt of the Niger Company's territory. We propose to take over that debt on the condition, of course, that we obtain the rights now possessed by the company to redeem it. The debt bears 5 per cent. interest, and is not redeemable at par until 1938; but it is redeemable at any time on three months' notice at a premium of 20 per cent.; and part of the proposal I have to make is that we shall raise £300,000 in order to redeem that debt at once. Then I come to another point. The company was allowed to raise customs duties for the necessary expenses of administration. I think it is very probable that if it had had any anticipation of what we propose to-day, the revenue from these customs duties would have been sufficient to bear those necessary expenses, because it would have been obvious to the company that, not having a permanent tenure, they were not bound to expend in the administration and development of their territory more than was absolutely necessary to secure their trade profits. But that was not the view they took of the position from the beginning. They considered, of course, that they had a permanent tenure under their charter, and they acted accordingly; expending in addition to the necessary outlay on administration to secure their trade profits large sums much beyond the produce of the customs duties,

which were paid by them out of profits which they made in trade. This matter has been gone into very carefully by the Foreign Office, who, as I think the Committee are aware, have been since the grant of the charter furnished every year with the company's administrative account. We have been satisfied that the company have a fair claim on this account to be reimbursed their expenditure in what may be called "unexhausted improvements," for, of course, they will not reap what they have sown in this way owing to the change that will be made in their position. The total amount of this expenditure, together with interest at about 2 per cent. since the granting of the charter, amounts to £300,000. That is the sum which we propose to ask Parliament to pay to the company on account of these unexhausted improvements. I think it ought never to be forgotten that the company risked a great deal in this matter. They have risked the whole of their capital in the attempt to develop a notoriously unhealthy and practically unknown region of Africa. They might have lost every penny of their capital. On the contrary, they have succeeded in their work, and I am sure that the House will not be willing to treat them with anything but fairness, and I would even add with liberality, in making this charge. Then I come to another point. In addition to their treaty rights—treaty rights, I mean, by cession of territory and matters of that kind—the company have acquired by private purchase very valuable land rights along the banks of the Niger. There is a strip for many miles along the banks of the Niger of excellent land in many places susceptible of irrigation, from 500 to 2,000 yards broad, which the company hold practically by virtue of purchase; and the total area so held may, I believe, be fairly estimated at something like 500 square miles, or 320,000 acres. It will be perfectly obvious to the Committee that these land rights must in future be of great value. The Niger is the great highway to this territory, and whether it be for the establishment of trading stations or factories, or the establishment of plantations, the strip of land to which I have referred at present affords not only the most suitable but perhaps the only really suitable ground for the promotion of commerce and industry in that country. We take these over from the company, and we also

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take over from the company the mineral rights they have acquired by treaty. Those rights are of considerable extent, particularly in the empire of Sokoto and Gando, and they exist under special treaties. It is reported that there are silver, tin, antimony and other metals in those regions; and, of course, there is always the hope of gold. I do not wish to exaggerate the importance of the mineral rights in this area, because it is a part of the world where hitherto minerals have not been successfully worked. But still it is perfectly obvious that the company holding those rights ought to transfer them to the Government so as to avoid friction and trouble in the future, and they will also be taken over by the Government on the conditions I am about to mention. We propose to pay to the company for its land rights I have described and for its mineral rights and also by way of compensation for the dislocation of business caused by the revocation of its charter, £150,000. The future Government of the territory will charge a royalty, and the company will for a period of ninety-nine years from the revocation of the charter be entitled to half the proceeds of any such royalty on minerals worked in a defined part of Northern Nigeria, between the Niger on the west and a line drawn from a place called Yola to Zinder on the east. Now I come to the last head, administrative plant. Of course, it is necessary that the new administration of the territories should be provided with adequate plant, buildings, steamers, and other requisites. We have had the advantage in this matter of the advice of Colonel Lugard and Sir R. Moor, who are intimately acquainted with the different places and with the property of the company to which I have referred. We propose to take over from the company a steamer, several hulks, launches, and boats, a considerable amount of war material, and the following buildings—at Akassa, the headquarters on the coast, a plot of 200 acres of made and cleared land, various buildings, machine shops and machinery, and a slipway for steamers; at Akaba, barracks, gaol, court-house; and similar buildings at Okuta and other places; and some stores which will have to be checked on the part of the company and of the Government. Of course, all these matters stand at a certain sum in the company's books. This

has been carefully gone into, and we have made very considerable deductions from the sum. We have agreed with the company to take over the property to which I have referred for the sum of £115,000. I believe they are worth more than that, and they certainly would cost far more if we had to provide them afresh for ourselves. The Committee will see that we have dealt with four several sums—£300,000 to pay off the debt; £300,000 compensation to the company for their expenditure in developing the territory; £150,000 for land and mineral rights and compensation for the dislocation of trade, and £115,000 for plant; amounting together to £865,000. We propose that that shall be a debt against these territories in future. I believe it will not be many years before they will begin to pay it off. Out of this we propose that £820,000 shall be raised by way of loan on terminable annuities for thirty years; the remaining £45,000, being for articles like steamers, stores, and warlike material, we propose to charge on the Consolidated Fund out of the revenues of the year. I think I have completed what I have to say with regard to the arrangements proposed to be made with the Royal Niger Company, and for any detailed statement of future arrangements for the government of our territories in this part of the world I think I ought to refer hon. Members to my right hon. friend the Colonial Secretary. But perhaps I may say generally that throughout these territories all inland customs frontiers will be abolished, and there will be perfect freedom of trade to all alike. There will be a common arms law throughout the whole region and a common tariff, except that the importation of trade spirits into Northern Nigeria will be prohibited as now. For the present, and until a healthy site for a capital can be selected and better means of communication provided, the territories will be divided for administrative purposes into three divisions all under the control of the Colonial Office. One division will be Lagos, with its present area; the next will be Southern Nigeria, composed of the Niger Coast Protectorate and part of the Niger Company's territories, nearly half as large again as now; and the third, Northern Nigeria, composed of the rest of the company's territories, including Borgu and Ilorin, bounded on the south by a line

drawn from Dahomey along the 9th parallel of latitude to Idda on the Niger, and thence following the same direction to the Anglo-German frontier. I should add that the military and police establishment in all these territories will be reorganised, and that especially in Lagos I believe it will be found capable of very material reduction, and in Northern Nigeria will be utilised for preventive purposes. I hope these proposals, which I have endeavoured to explain as shortly as possible, may commend themselves to the Committee. Papers relating to the subject will be laid on the Table to-night. Of course, if the Committee should agree to the Resolution, and I should be allowed to bring in a Bill to be based upon it, we should not propose to take the Second Reading until the papers shall have been in the hands of Members. But I suggest that, at any rate, there should be no objection in principle to the proposals. It may seem to some hon. Members that we are assuming on the part of the Government, and, therefore, of the country, a very material increase of responsibility in this region. That is not really the fact. All the responsibility rested upon us throughout, and all we are really assuming is the power of carrying out that responsibility as it ought to be carried out. In making this change we have endeavoured to deal fairly with the Royal Niger Company. I feel most strongly that to revoke their charter, to deprive them of their existing position, to reduce them to the position of a trading company and nothing else, without the fairest consideration, would be an act of gross injustice. We must remember what they have done for this country. I do not say they have been faultless in their policy or administration; I dare say many points could be stated which would show the contrary, but they have done a great work for us in those parts of the world. They have established a position which will be of profit and advantage to this country in the future to an extent which we perhaps are hardly able to appreciate now, and therefore, when on public grounds we feel ourselves compelled to ask Parliament to make this change, I would submit very respectfully that it ought to be made with the fairest and fullest consideration for the rights and interests of those who have done this great work.

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Motion made and Question proposed—

"That it is expedient to authorise the issue, out of the Consolidated Fund, of sums not exceeding £865,000, and for the purpose of providing for any such issue, to borrow, by means of terminable annuities charged on and paid out of moneys annually provided by Parliament for foreign and colonial services, and if these moneys are insufficient, out of the Consolidated Fund, any sum not exceeding £820,000 for making payments to the Royal Niger Company, in consideration of the transfer to the Crown of the administrative powers of the said company, together with their treaty and other rights, property, and for meeting the expenditure rendered necessary by such transfer."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): The Committee must, I am sure, have listened with the deepest interest to the singularly clear statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Of course he will not, as he states, expect the Committee to pronounce an opinion on the particulars of the arrangement which has been made, especially in the absence of the Papers which have been promised. We must defer any discussion, I would suggest, until the Bill is before us for our approval. But the story which the right hon. Gentleman has told is, I think, a very clear instance at once of the convenience and of the dangers and difficulties attending government by chartered company. There are, as I have said, conveniences in the system, but undoubtedly one of the effects of it is that the country is often insidiously led on to a somewhat rapid expansion of its responsibilities without being really aware of what is being incurred in its name. I therefore think this is obviously a case in which this mode of government has been carried too far, and that it is time this country should openly undertake its responsibility and become possessed of the power to deal with what is practically in its hands. I believe there will be universal agreement in what the right hon. Gentleman has said as to the conduct of Sir George Goldie and those who have taken part with him in the control of the Niger Company. There is no doubt that individually he has shown the very highest qualities, and that those who have been associated with him have done their part well also. The policy of the company also has been distinguished by an evident desire all through to deal with the great evils of slave raiding, slave driving and slavery

itself, as well as with those of the liquor trade in those regions. That in itself should be sufficient to cover any trifling sins that may be brought home to the company in the course of its administration. But at the present time I do not think it is desirable to spend much time in discussing the matter, because until we have details before us in the Papers promised by the right hon. Gentleman we really are not in a position to offer any detailed criticism upon the proposal he has submitted—a proposal which, however, I imagine will commend itself to the judgment of the Committee.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton):

I entirely agree with the Chancellor of the Exchequer that this company is far more respectable than those other chartered companies which the right hon. Gentleman did not name, but which we perfectly well understood him as referring to. I think it is most desirable that we should take over this company. But it should also be thoroughly understood that while recognising the fact that the company ought to be taken over we entirely reserve to ourselves the right to discuss the terms of the agreement, because it has more than once happened that when a Vote of this kind has been taken we have subsequently been told that we have pledged ourselves to agree to it. We want to have before us the figures and the accounts of the company before we can come to a conclusion. This is a company with a capital of £500,000 and a debt of £250,000. So far as I gather we take over the debt of a quarter of a million and further agree to give the company a sum which is in excess of the par value of its shares. For that we are to obtain the political rights of the company, certain lands, and certain mineral rights. It certainly does seem to me to be a somewhat considerable amount to pay, and the Chartered Company ought to pay the cost of the administrative charges. We leave to the company practically all its commercial undertaking, and therefore I do not see, when we positively relieve the company of a heavy charge upon its finances, why we should pay them for being relieved.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I congratulate both the company and the

Government on the arrangement made. It seems to me that both in the interests of good government and of Her Majesty's Government themselves it is desirable that some such new arrangement as the Chancellor of the Exchequer has sketched should be made. As regards the amount, I think we are not capable of dealing with that at the present moment; and indeed this discussion must necessarily be adjourned, in the first place because we shall have further information before us, and in the second place, this House cannot deal with figures which are thrown out, as it were, without the slightest notice. But is it not possible to make some alteration in the practice of the House? When money is to be voted, the amount to be asked for should be placed in hon. Members' hands a day or two before they are called upon to vote; and I should like to ask whether it would not be possible so to alter the practice in this respect as to bring it into accord with what I confess I believe to be the true intention and meaning of the Standing Order.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): If we agree to this Vote we shall be really binding ourselves, if not to the exact figure, substantially to the amount which it is proposed to give to the Niger Company for the revocation of its charter. I object to the sum, which I think is monstrous so far as we have any information laid before us, and I object to the whole principle on which the sum has been arrived at in the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I think the House of Commons is very unfairly treated in being asked, in the way in which it has been called upon to-day, to Vote a sum of £800,000 for compensation to a company when, I venture to say, we are all, even after the lucid statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, practically in the dark as to what we are doing. There is really nothing in the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer which would convince anybody that we are getting £20,000 value for £865,000. We ought to have had a statement of the finances of the country, and of the balance between the receipts from the Customs duties and the administrative expenses since the charter was granted. We ought to have some information also as to the price which was paid, if any, by the Chartered Company for those valuable lands which

we heard so much of in the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and for those vague mineral rights which may turn out to be of no value whatever. I object to the amount which is set forth in this Vote, and the method by which this amount has been arrived at, and the manner in which the Committee has been treated on the present occasion. There is one point which appears to me to be of exceedingly great importance in connection with this proposal. This, unfortunately, is not the only chartered company now existing under the Crown, and you cannot deal with the Niger Chartered Company without taking into account the precedent that you are setting. You have to remember that another chartered company will have to be wound up very soon, for, if what is published in the newspapers is true, I think the time is very near at hand when complications will arise which will compel the Government to deal with the South African Chartered Company, and the same principle will apply. The Chancellor of the Exchequer drew a very flattering but hardly true comparison between the Niger Chartered Company and the South African Chartered Company. It is notorious that the South African Company has pursued methods which may necessitate an outlay of five, or six, or seven millions, if the charter is to be revoked on the same principle as has been adopted in the present case. Therefore, in dealing with this proposal, we cannot deal with it as if it were entirely disconnected with other matters. What is it we are asked to do by this resolution? The Niger Company, according to the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, is to do great things for this country. Well, it remains to be proved that the Niger district will be an advantage to this country at all. I confess that I have not sufficient knowledge to form an opinion; but the fact remains that none of these West African colonies have ever paid their way, and this Niger Company, although, according to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, controlled by men of great capacity and great business experience, never has paid its way; on the contrary, the deficit which we are asked to take over, amounting to £250,000, represents a period of ten or eleven years' administration. It therefore remains to be proved whether we are not, in the present instance, taking over a losing concern, and relieving the company

Mr. Dillon.

of a burden which is equivalent to a loss of many thousands per annum. Then, nothing was said on the trading position of the company. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has not placed before us any rough estimate of the loss contemplated by the company consequent upon the withdrawal of the charter. Therefore, it appears to me that, with the exception of buildings, steamers, land, and mineral rights, the Government is getting nothing whatever for all this money. I do not think that is a reasonable proposal, and though I know that many Members who have their doubts of this scheme may not see their way to do so, I shall divide the House against this proposal if I can get anybody to tell with me.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): There is one question which ought to be brought before the Committee before this Vote is taken, and it is a similar one to that which occurred on the purchase of the East Africa Company some time ago. I understand that the French Government have some claim against the Niger Company—which they have put out as a set off against the Waima claim—owing to what occurred on the River Niger some time ago. It is now stated that the French Government are prepared to give compensation, and to go to arbitration to see what amount is to be paid, but they require that the other claim which they have against the Niger Company should be settled at the same time. Now that is a matter which ought to be raised here, and the Government ought to tell us whether a settlement will be come to between the company and the French Government before the company is taken over, otherwise it appears to me to be a bar to the arrangement in the Waima case which the Chancellor of the Exchequer tells us he is anxious to come to. All these matters, I think, should be taken into account.

*SIR M. HICKS-BEACH: I do not think I need say anything further than that this motion does not in any way bind the House as to the Bill the Government is about to introduce. The hon. Members for East Mayo and King's Lynn seem rather to have misinterpreted the meaning of this resolution. I take it that the resolution is tantamount to

asking leave to introduce a Bill, and hon. Members will be quite at liberty to discuss the principle on the Second Reading. With regard to the point put by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Forest of Dean, I understand that there are claims, not only by the French Government against the company, but that there are very heavy claims by the Niger Company against the French Government. But all that will be considered.

*MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe): I am bound to say I think there is some substance in the matter raised by the hon. Member for King's Lynn, and I think there could be no objection to placing these Resolutions upon the Paper, that we might see them. I think that the House of Commons, dealing as it does with the taxpayers' money, is entitled to see these resolutions before they are moved. I am quite aware that this is not a matter which is entirely in the discretion of the Chairman. No doubt every Government desires in these matters to be as silent and swift as possible; but that is no reason why the House, sitting in Committee, should not have full and ample notice of the actual sum of money that it will be required to vote. I entirely accept the views of the right hon. Gentleman, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as to the meaning of the resolution, and we are not bound beyond giving formal liberty to bring in a Bill, and therefore do not now say anything further on the matter.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): The Chancellor of the Exchequer has promised us Papers, but this Paper will not be included. It is essential to know what the profits of the company are year by year, and I would suggest that we should also have the last two or three balance-sheets of the company, and we ought to know what its trading arrangements are. As I understand, the Government are going to take over the administrative part of the company, and leave the company as a trading company. If that is so, we ought first to know what the costs of administration are, and also what the profits of the company are. I trust the Chancellor of the Exchequer will be able to give us those figures, so that we may be able to judge what price should be given to the company.

COMMANDER BETHELL (York, E. R., Holderness): I think the reasons which

called this particular form of procedure into existence have long since passed away, and that being so, it is not worth while offering any resistance to this motion.

DR. CLARK (Caithness): Before this Vote is carried to a Division we ought certainly to have all the facts before the House. I am afraid I cannot follow the Government in this matter. All I know of the Niger Company is that it is a trading company, and twelve years ago it was given a charter, and prevented the men of Liverpool and the Clyde, who were doing business in those parts, from earning their living, and they were ruined. Now you are going to buy back what was given for nothing. I do not know who is going to benefit by that. I would like to know before anything is done. We shall have a list of the shareholders before us so that we may see whom the money is going to.

MR. W. F. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby): I have systematically asked for many years for the balance-sheets of the Chartered Niger Company to be produced. I cordially endorse what has been said upon this matter, and I am prepared to say that the people of Liverpool, although they have suffered at the hands of the Company, welcome the proposed change, and are prepared to forget and forgive. At the same time, we should like to know what we are going to get for our money.

MR. WARNER (Stafford, Lichfield): It seems to me that the Government are going to buy for a large sum of money a thing which they know nothing about, and I certainly think with the hon. Member for Poplar that we ought to have some account of the cost of administration. I hope this point will be considered by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and he will be able to give us some satisfactory answer on the point.

*SIR M. HICKS-BEACH: There will be no difficulty in giving any information with regard to the cost of administration of the Company. As to the trade accounts, I am not quite sure that we shall find it necessary to have those. But I have no doubt that we shall be able to give the House full particulars.

MR. MOON (St. Pancras, N.): Has the Standing Order 62 been complied with here?

*THE CHAIRMAN: The Standing Order has been complied with in the same way that it has been for the last fifty or sixty years.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I do not think that the Chancellor of the Exchequer is quite right in saying that the House binds itself to nothing at all. It binds itself to vote £800,000, and it is not the mere formality which is suggested. What I suggest is that in future, when Her Majesty's Government desire to raise money, instead of leaving out the amount, they should allow it to be printed in the white paper. Might I appeal to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to consider that point?

*THE CHAIRMAN: The procedure under which this is taken is very well known. It complies with a Standing Order which has been in existence some thirty-three years, and the procedure dates back for some two hundred years before that. There is nothing whatever unusual in it.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): Several Members of the Committee have complained that the right hon. Gentleman has not brought forward sufficient data upon which to base even this stage of the Bill, and the right hon. Gentleman, as I understand, has promised to supply to the House full data later on. Is it not within the powers of any Member of the House to propose the adjournment of the Debate on the ground of insufficient information having been given?

*THE CHAIRMAN: I cannot put the question to report progress, as it seems to me, the practice being, as I have stated, a very old one, to alter it would require an alteration of the Standing Orders. There is nothing in the practice which has been followed on this occasion to differentiate it from the thousands of cases which have occurred before. I see no reason, therefore, why the adjournment should be moved.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: Am I to understand that even if the Ministry come before the Committee without any data whatsoever in justification of any Vote, however large, we have no power in

this House to postpone the further consideration of the question, and that, as a matter of fact, the Committee is without any remedy, and that the Government may force through the House, with or without information, any proposal whatsoever, for any sum however large? I think, Sir, you will see the vast importance of the question now raised — whether the Government is entitled to proceed without being interrupted by a proposal for adjournment, however absolutely insufficient the information presented to the House may be.

*THE CHAIRMAN: I certainly did not go so far as the hon. Member says. The ground on which the hon. Member for King's Lynn wished to move the adjournment of the Debate was that the procedure on this occasion did not follow the Standing Order. That was the sole ground, as I understood.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: May I correct you, Sir? The ground was, that sufficient time had not been given to the Committee to appreciate the figures which were put before it verbally only. I did suggest that there was not a proper compliance with Standing Orders. But that was not the ground upon which I put my objection.

MR. DILLON: May I remind the Committee of what occurred last year on a similar motion in connection with the Irish Local Government Bill. When exception was taken by myself and other Members upon this very point—that the Resolution was not placed upon the Paper in accordance with practice—the Chancellor of the Exchequer agreed to an adjournment. The resolution was placed on the Paper, but the Debate was adjourned on the ground that we had not time to consider the full bearing of the resolution.

*SIR M. HICKS-BEACH: My recollection is entirely contrary to that. The point in that case was that the resolution did not give as much money as was expected.

MR. DILLON: That does not touch the question of order. That was a part

of the objection, but the other part of the objection was that it was impossible to discuss the question until we had the Resolution in our hands. A difference of opinion arose on the Treasury Bench as to whether it did limit us on the very point we have raised, and it became evident to the House that it would not be fair to discuss the question without having more information and more time to consider the matter.

*THE CHAIRMAN: Of course it is open to any hon. Member to move the adjournment of the Debate on the ground of information not being sufficient. My only duty is, if I consider a motion for adjournment an abuse of the rules of the House, to put it at once, or refuse to accept it. I certainly understood the hon. Member for King's Lynn to take exception to this Resolution on the ground that the procedure was not in compliance with Standing Orders. In fact, the first time he rose he had a copy of the Standing Orders in his hand. Therefore I presumed his sole objection to the procedure was that it did not follow the Standing Orders. To take such an objection, in my opinion, was an abuse of the forms of the

House, and I refused to accept the motion of adjournment. But if the hon. Member tells me that he desired to move the adjournment on the ground that sufficient information had not been given, I will, under those circumstances, accept his motion.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I wish to move the adjournment on the ground that we have not had the figures before us in any written form; we have only had them verbally. That would be the ground, and because sufficient information has not been placed before the Committee. I would therefore move the adjournment of the Debate.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY
(Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.)
rose to speak.

Question put, "That the Chairman report progress, and ask leave to sit again."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 103;
Noes, 192. (Division List No. 211.)

AYES.

Allan, William (Gateshead)
Bainbridge, Emeson
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Billson, Alfred
Birrell, Augustine
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Sir Charles (Glasgow)
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Clark, Dr. G. B. (Caithness-sh.)
Clough, Walter Owen
Colville, John
Crombie, John William
Curran, Thomas (Sligo, S.)
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan)
Davitt, Michael
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Dunn, John William
Ellis, John Edward
Evans, Sir F. H. (Southampton)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flynn, James Christopher

Foster, Sir W. (Derby Co.)
Fowler, Right Hon Sir Henry
Fox, Dr. Joseph Francis
Gourley, Sir Edward Temperley
Haldane, Richard Burdon
Hedderwick, Thos. Charles H.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Holland, Wm. H. (York, W.R.)
Horniman, Frederick John
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jocey, Sir James
Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)
Kay-Shuttleworth, Rt. Hon. Sir U.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kitson, Sir James
Labouchere, Henry
Langley, Batty
Leng, Sir John
Lloyd-George, David
Logan, John William
Lough, Thomas
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Sir Leonard
Macaleese, Daniel
McEwan, William
McLeod, John
Mappin, Sir Frederick T.
Mendil, Sigismund Ferdinand
Montagu, Sir S. (Whitechapel)
Morgan W. P. (Merthyr)
Moulton, John Fletcher
Norton, Capt. Cecil William

Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
Palmer, Sir Chas. M. (Durham)
Pease, Sir Joseph W. (Durham)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pilkington, Sir G. A. (Lancs SW)
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Briggs (Yorks.)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
Robson, William Snowdon
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sinclair, Capt. John (Forfrshire)
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Souttar, Robinson
Stanhope, Hon. P. J.
Steadman, William Charles
Stevenson, Francis S.
Strachey, Edward
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, Abel (Carnarthen, E.)
Thomas, A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wedderburn, Sir William
Weir, James Galloway
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Williams, John Carvell (Notts)

Wilson, Charles Henry (Hull)
Wilson, Hy. J. (York, W. R.)
Wilson, John (Govan)
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Huddersf'd)

Woods, Samuel
Young, Samuel (Cavan, East)
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr.
Gibson Bowles and Mr. T.
P. O'Connor.

NOES.

Aird, John
Allsopp, Hon. George
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arnold, Alfred
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Joceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (Walworth)
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarras, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred.
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Rt. Hn. Gerald W. (Leeds)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barnes, Frederic Gorell
Barry, Rt. Hn. A. H. Smith. (Hunts)
Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
Bartley, George C. T.
Barton, Dunbar Plunket
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Bemrose, Sir Henry Howe
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Beresford, Lord Charles
Bethell, Commander
Blownaggee, Sir M. M.
Biddulph, Michael
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex)
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, A. Montagu
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt. Hn. J. A. (Glasgow)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carlile, William Walter
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, E.)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chelsea, Viscount
Clarke, Sir E. (Plymouth)
Cochrane, Hon. T. H. A. E.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colomb, Sir John C. Ready
Courtney, Rt. Hon. Leonard H.
Cox, Irwin Edward B.
Cranborne, Viscount
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cruddas, William Donaldson
Dalbiac, Col. Philip Hugh
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Denny, Colonel
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Doxford, William Theodore
Drucker, A.
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph D.
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edw.
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (Man.)
Finch, George H.

Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
FitzWygram, General Sir F.
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Ernest
Foister, Colonel (Lancaster)
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (City of Lon)
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Giles, Charles Tyrrell
Gordon, Hon. John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Rt. Hn. G. (St. George's)
Graham, Henry Robert
Gull, Sir Cameron
Gunter, Colonel
Halsey, Thomas Frederick
Hamilton, Rt. Hn. Lord George
Hanbury, Rt. Hn. Robert W.
Hardy, Laurence
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Heath, James
Heaton, John Henniker
Hermon-Hodge, R. Trotter
Hill, Arthur (Down, West)
Hoare, Edw. B. (Hampstead)
Hoare, Samuel (Norwich)
Holland, Hon. Lionel R. (Bow)
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Hozier, Hon. James Henry Cecil
Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn
Hughes, Colonel Edwin
Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)
Jenkins, Sir John Jones
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Jolliffe, Hon. H. George
Jones, David Brynmor (Swan.)
Kimber, Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Lees
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Lea, Sir Thomas (Londonderry)
Lecky, Rt. Hn. William E. H.
Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn. (Swan)
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Col. C. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (Liverpool)
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lubbock, Rt. Hon. Sir John
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (Edinb'gh, W)
Malcolm, Ian
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Mellor, Rt. Hon. J. W. (Yorks.)
Meysey-Thomson, Sir H. M.
Middlemore, J. Throgmorton.

Milton, Viscount
Milward, Colonel Victor
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Moore, William (Antrim, N.)
Murray, Rt. Hn. A. Graham (Bute)
Murray, Chas. J. (Coventry)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Newdigate, Francis Alexander
Nicholson, William Graham
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, R. (Lancs. Newton)
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Priestley, Sir W. Overend (Edin.)
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Rankin, Sir James
Richards, Henry Charles
Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir M. W.
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Rothschild, Hon. Lionel Walter
Royds, Clement Molyneux
Russell, Gen. F. S. (Ch't'nh'm)
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Ryder, John Herbert Dudley
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Seely, Charles Hilton
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
Sidebottom, Wm. (Derbysh.)
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Smith, James P. (Lanarks.)
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk)
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
Stanley, Henry M. (Lambeth)
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir J. M.
Strauss, Arthur
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphrey N.
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Univ.)
Tomlinson, Wm. E. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard
Wanklyn, James Leslie
Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Whiteley, H. (Ashton-u.-L.)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hon. E. R. (Bath)
Wolf, Gustav Wilhelm
Woodall, William
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wyndham, George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy
Young, Commander (Berks, E.)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES,
Sir William Walrond and
Mr. Anstruther.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I think this is one of our most remarkable experiences for many years. Here we have the Government of the day coming down to propose an expenditure of over £800,000 and the taking over of the vast responsibilities of the government of a large portion of country, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer—the gentleman mainly responsible for the administration of the finances of the country, and the guardian and custodian of the public purse—makes this proposal without putting before the Committee one shred or syllable of information except such as he has verbally given to the House. I venture to say that in the history of this Parliament this is an unprecedented proposal, and it is an unprecedented manner of conducting business. The Chancellor of the Exchequer—who, deservedly, I believe, has the reputation of being a rigid economist and a vigilant guardian of the public purse—has come before the Committee to-night in a manner which would do credit to the most daring audacity of the most daring company promoter. He comes down here, and although he must have had this proposal in his mind for weeks and months, there is not a single Member of this House who has a single scrap of print before him with regard to this transaction. The right hon. Gentleman has felt the difficulty of the situation, because he has promised that the Papers will be ready to-night. Why, then, if the Papers are to be presented to-night is not this resolution postponed till to-morrow? I put it to the business men of this House whether in all which they have ever read during the last ten years of rotten company promoting they have ever heard of a case in which they have been asked to take shares without a single fact about the transaction with which they are asked to deal? This proposal reminds me of some recent transactions on the Stock Exchange, where a number of people began to gamble in shares before they even saw the prospectus. Here there are over £800,000 asked for from the taxpayers of this country; here is the control of a large portion of country passing from the hands of a private company into the hands of the Government; and therefore I say it is a transaction of vast and momentous importance; and although the Chancellor of the Exchequer tells us that the Papers will not be ready until

to-night, yet he asks this Committee to accept this proposal to-day before a single one of these Papers is forthcoming. I do not think that a more remarkable fact has ever occurred in our history. What are our materials for forming an opinion of the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer? I understand that he has given some details with regard to how this money is going to be spent. Just fancy upwards of £800,000 being asked for upon mere verbal details given across the floor of the House, of which Members of this House have no other means of gathering the drift except by the hasty notes which they were able to take in the course of the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Not only this, but he has made a most remarkable statement with regard to the proposed expenditure of this money. I understand that he stated that £120,000 was to be given for the mineral rights and land.

*SIR M. HICKS-BEACH dissented.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: The right hon. Gentleman shakes his head, and I must confess that I have not had the advantage of hearing the statement of the right hon. Gentleman. (Hear, hear.) Some hon. Members opposite cheer that statement ironically, but I doubt if even they have had the advantage of hearing the statement. How many of the Members who went into the Lobby just now had the advantage of hearing the statement made by the right hon. Gentleman? Is it tolerable that in a great transaction of this kind you should have no means of information except a verbal statement which not one-third or one-fourth of the Members of this House had the advantage of hearing? I only repeat the statement as it was given to me, and I understand that a very considerable sum is to be given for the so-called mineral rights. This transaction must be sifted to the bottom. I believe, from the evidence before me, that it is a thoroughly bad and unsound transaction, and the manner in which it has been brought before this Committee—with all due respect to the right hon. Gentleman—is an abuse of the powers of Government in forcing this proposal upon the Committee. This charter, I understand, was got for nothing, and was granted by the State something like thirteen years ago. This monopoly, which did not cost the

company one penny, is now to be bought back by the State which gave it for £800,000. That is surely a most extraordinary transaction which will require a great deal of justification. But that is not my real point. What I object to is the manner in which this transaction has been dealt with. I observed that the First Lord of the Treasury was rising at a previous portion of this Debate, and although I was rising at the same time I gave way to the Leader of the House. Now, I should like to hear what the right hon. Gentleman has to say about this transaction. Is it right that we should be left in this way without information? Then there is one point which the Chancellor of the Exchequer gave in his defence of his manner of dealing with this question; he said that this stage was practically a formal stage of the Bill, and that it pledged nobody to anything except giving the Government permission to introduce the Bill. I do not wish to imply that this resolution will decide the fate of the Bill, but, at the same time, I want to put this to the First Lord of the Treasury. Why is it that this method of procedure has been adopted by the Government with regard to all money bills? At this stage of the Bill, instead of being bound down by the same rule of only a single speech which binds the House when the Speaker is in the chair, there is full and ample means of discussing this question. Are all these rules a farcical nullity or a reality? If the right hon. Gentleman can come down here and make a proposal of this description, then I say these rules are a farcical nullity. If these precautions were meant to be real I do think the right hon. Gentleman is straining his power in this House in calling upon us to assent to this Bill in the absence of material for judging of the merits of the transaction. For these reasons I do hope that the right hon. Gentleman will postpone the further consideration of this matter until these Papers—which he says will be in the hands of Members to-night—have been issued, and until we have had some further opportunity of judging this great and important measure.

DR. CLARK: I should like to ask whether it is proposed to take over from the company its administrative duties, which are carried on at a loss, while all the company's trading rights are to be

Mr. T. P. O'Connor.

continued to it. Are the Government acting in the interests of Liverpool and Manchester? The Chambers of Commerce of those cities asked that this monopolist company should be bought out altogether in order that there might be free trade and competition in the region of the Niger. But according to the proposal before us you are only going to buy up what has been a source of loss to the company, and the company is to continue as a trading concern with all its huge monopolies. I suppose the company was well aware that something of this kind was going to take place, and it has been doing all it possibly can to secure its own position as a trading concern after it has given up to you what is to it a source of loss, and it will still be able to exercise a practical monopoly. Is it not a fact that the company has been buying sites where trading stations could be placed, and has been putting pressure on the chiefs to obtain valuable rights for a mere song? You are taking over all responsibility, and you are asking Parliament to approve of that course without giving us any Papers on the subject. I think it is ridiculous, under those circumstances, to ask us to pass this resolution without any information having been given to us. If this stage is necessary, we ought to have full particulars before we pass from it. This scheme was, I believe, originally promoted by an astute Glasgow man, who secured a promise from the late Government—this Government is not responsible—to buy up at a great price what is now a source of loss to the company. Before the Government ask us to pass this Vote they ought to tell us whether these are the actual facts or not. When the matter was mentioned it was thought that the Government were buying up the whole concern, just as the British East African Company was bought up. We ought to have been supplied with a list of the shareholders of the company, in order that we may know with whom we are dealing. Every ordinary company is required to send a list of its shareholders to Somerset House, but a chartered company is not required to give that information. That and other information ought to be given to us before we proceed any further with this proposal.

*SIR M. HICKS-BEACH: The statement of the hon. Gentleman is not a fact.

What we propose is to take over the rights of the company in such a way that there must be free trade on the Niger, and there can be no monopoly in future.

DR. CLARK : Is it not a fact that the company has had no legal monopoly for ten years ?

*SIR M. HICKS-BEACH : It has been alleged that the Company has had a practical monopoly in recent years, but it cannot have that monopoly in future. As to the land rights, I explained to the Committee that the land rights we propose to purchase are the very land rights alluded to by the hon. Gentleman. Therefore any trade which the Government of the Niger Protectorate desire to attract to the neighbourhood will have no difficulty in settling there.

MR. DILLON : In the course of this Debate a principle of the most extraordinary character has been laid down, and has apparently been accepted by some hon. Gentlemen on this side of the House. It is, however, a principle which I venture to contend is absolutely unsatisfactory, viz., that this motion does not in any way bind the House to the amount of money it is proposed to take, and that it is nothing more than a formal motion. If that be so it would make no difference what the Chancellor of the Exchequer asked for, and he might have asked without question for £10,000,000 instead of £800,000. When put in that light can anyone understand that it does not matter what amount of money is asked for in the Resolution ? Of course, such a contention is absurd. If the Committee passes the motion it will substantially accept the estimate in the Resolution. I do not mean that the House will be subsequently debarred from cutting down the amount on some small detail, but I hold that this is the stage when substantially the amount of the burden to be placed on the taxpayers has to be decided, and we are entitled to discuss before the Resolution is passed the general principles on which this sum has been arrived at. This sum appears to be based on a general calculation made without anything like sufficient information, and we should have the detailed calculation on which the items are based before we are substantially committed to the principle. On the question of land, it is quite true, as the

Chancellor of the Exchequer has stated, that certain valuable lands on the Niger River are to be taken over by the Government, but we have no details. We do not know that the company might not have retained all the valuable sites it desired, and handed over to the Government all which it did not value, but for which it is now to obtain £100,000. I think we are entitled to know how many cases of gin were given for these lands : it is probable that they were all bought for forty or fifty cases of the poison which is imported into the district. I really do say we are entitled to have some information as to the nature of the bargain, and the price to be given for the lands to be obtained. We are called upon to purchase the losing part of a concern, leaving to the company all its rights to carry on the business which has been a source of profit to it. The taxpayers are called upon to pay over £500,000, which is sufficient to give a bonus of 100 per cent. to every shareholder in the company, and then the company will continue its trading and pay 6 per cent. dividend. That is the transaction so far as I could understand it from the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and if that be a fair statement, it appears on the face of it, to use plain language, to be a most monstrous job. Under the circumstances we are not unreasonable in asking for further information.

MR. THOMAS BAYLEY (Derbyshire, Chesterfield) : I desire to ask one question. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has stated that there is to be free trade on the Niger River. Now the Niger River is only a small portion of the territory to be taken over, and I desire to know if there is to be absolutely free trade in the entire territory we are taking over ? I think, for the credit of the House, and for our reputation as business men, that the Government have been very badly advised in not giving us more information. We have absolutely not a scrap of information, and even the terms of the resolution were not given on the Orders of the Day. It does appear to me to be exceedingly unfortunate, at a time when we have so much going on in connection with companies which is not satisfactory to this House or to the honour and credit of the country generally, that we should depart from our high traditions of fair play and

honourable dealing in such a way as will leave us open—I will not say to reflection—but which will, at any rate, make people wonder whether chartered companies are going to rule this House absolutely. I am very much in favour of this company being bought out, but all its rights should be bought out in a fair, clear, and honourable manner, and the transaction should be carried out in a straightforward way. It would have been a great deal better to have had a Committee of this House to deal with this question, and I hope the Government will reconsider their decision, and will not take a Vote on this resolution until we have had the printed Papers, and can absolutely know what we are buying, instead of giving a vote in the dark, as we would otherwise be doing. While I am in favour of buying out the company, I will most decidedly vote against the Government, as a protest against the manner in which they have brought forward this question.

MR. LABOUCHERE: The fault lies really very much with the rules and regulations of the House in regard to Money Bills. It is a very great disadvantage—as a rule—that we do not have the Papers before us before the resolution is proposed, and the resolution itself is not even put down in the Orders of the House. Then, although the Chancellor of the Exchequer says that we are not pledged to go on with the Bill because we have voted for the resolution, there is a bias in favour of going on with it if we agree to the resolution and allow the Chancellor of the Exchequer to raise that sum of money. I hope that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, before the Second Reading of the Bill, will give us very full Papers on everything connected with the company. The Chancellor of the Exchequer says that he will lay Papers before the House, but he has not told us what the Papers will be. For instance, in view of public opinion out of doors, it is desirable that we should have before us the number and names of the shareholders of the company. In all companies, unless chartered companies, their shareholders' names are to be seen at Somerset House. But these chartered companies were not intended as commercial companies, and consequently they were excluded from the operation of the Limited Liability Act, and we do not have the same oppor-

tunity of looking into the operations of chartered as of other companies. It will simplify proceedings very much when the Second Reading comes on if we do have full Papers. For instance, take the case of the land and minerals. My hon. friend behind me said that these were obtained for a bottle of gin, or for a few beads. I do not know what was paid for them, but we know perfectly well that in all parts of Africa the black man is robbed for the benefit of the white man. When you talk of treaties having been made by which land rights and mineral rights are made over to white men, what happens? Someone belonging to one company or another meets a black man. Of course, he has an interpreter with him. He asks the black man if he is proprietor of certain land, and if he will sign a paper he shall have a bottle of gin. The black man at once accepts; a paper is put before him, and he is told to make his mark on it, which he does. And then we say that we have made a treaty by which all the rights in that country of the emperor, king, or chief, or whatever you call him, have been given over to us. That is the origin of all these treaties, and under these circumstances we ought to have the accounts of the company for the last ten or dozen years, with information as to how the lands and minerals were bought, and what has been paid for them. There is one point the Chancellor of the Exchequer could tell us now. I gather there is a loan to be paid off of £250,000. I do not know what price it was issued at; perhaps it was issued at below par. But the Chancellor of the Exchequer told us that it would require £300,000 to pay it off.

***SIR M. HICKS-BEACH:** The loan of £250,000 was raised on a charge of £12,500 a year on the Customs duties of the Niger territory. It was repayable at par in 1938. Obviously the debt bears interest at 5 per cent., but there is a power to redeem it at any time on three months' notice, by a premium of 20 per cent., and we propose to raise £300,000 in order to do that.

MR. LABOUCHERE: The company has made a very good bargain for itself, or rather for the gentlemen connected with this loan. All these things we want to go into. We want to know exactly the expenditure, and how it was

Mr. Thomas Bayley.

incurred. I confess I really do not understand the figures of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He tells us that we are to pay off this loan of £300,000 raised on the Customs duties, but if we pay off this loan, and take over the obligations of paying for the administration of the country, we really benefit the company in two ways, because the customs at present do not pay the cost of administration. If the company retains its commercial rights on which it makes its money, and at the same time if we pay off the loan, the £125,000 per annum goes into the commercial pocket.

*SIR M. HICKS-BEACH dissented.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Anyhow, that is a proof that stupid people like myself may make mistakes on a verbal statement. If I am wrong, that is a reason why I urge the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in the interest of public business, to give us the very fullest accounts, and all the documents concerning this company which we deem necessary, in order that we may be able to arrive at a proper conclusion as to how much money ought to be paid to the company.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs): My hon. friends who oppose this Resolution do so from two different points of view. In the first place, we claim, and I think rightly, that on a matter of such great importance the ordinary rule should have been somewhat departed from, and the right hon. Gentleman should have given us the necessary Papers before the Resolution was brought before the House. There have been many occasions on which a demand similar to this has been met by the Government. I remember a case in which a very small sum was involved. The Chancellor of the Exchequer came forward with a proposal to give a certain guarantee to a certain Highland railway. I opposed the proposal, and the net result was that it was abandoned until such time as we had the full Papers before us, and then we had a much more useful and full discussion than we could have had without the Papers. It is all very well to say that, according to Parliamentary forms, this is an introductory matter; but the result is that we bring in a Bill to carry out the decision of the Committee. The Bill itself is only a secondary method of

carrying that decision into effect; and, therefore, it seems to me that we are entitled to fuller information. It has been said that we are buying a losing concern, and we are paying for it a vast amount of money—that such profit as had been made did not come out of the land, but from the trading which the company is still to retain. We ought to have some sound evidence on which the Government have based their decision. If an ordinary business man goes to buy a property, the first question he considers is how much a year has this property been yielding for the last ten or twenty years; and he finds this out before he puts a penny down. And if he discovers that the property has been yielding no money at all he will only offer the very smallest figure for it. It is said that this is practically to be made a free trade country, that we are purchasing certain lands which the company had acquired, and the right hon. Gentleman assures us that it would be impossible for the company to have a monopoly. But I see it stated in responsible newspapers this morning that the company had been buying lands a little distance away from those which they have sold to the Government. If that is true, it shows a shrewdness on the part of the company, and a want of enterprise on the part of the Government. This is more than a mere question of money; we are taking over by this resolution a vast territory, and the administration of twenty-five or thirty millions of people. That is a very big order. Without any Papers or evidence, and without any real opportunity for discussion, we are to be committed to the principle to-night that this great private enterprise is to cease, and that for the future that vast territory is to be governed by this country. The company have had a charter, but it is a question of very grave doubt whether the enormous power which they have exercised up to the present time is a power they were entitled to use at all. It seems to me that in the interest of the Government, and of the Bill which the right hon. Gentleman is about to bring forward, the wishes of such a very large number of the Opposition should be considered. If we were to have the Papers to-night the resolution might be taken on Wednesday, by which time we would have had the opportunity of reading the correspondence. If the right hon. Gentleman will give way, it

will shorten the length of time for discussion on the Bill itself.

SIR M. HICKS-BEACH: The Second Reading of the Bill will not be taken until hon. Members have had ample time to read the Papers.

MR. DALZIEL: It is so far satisfactory to know that the Second Reading will not be taken to-night. But sufficient time to consider the Papers before the Second Reading may mean a few days to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and a much longer period to those who are opposing it.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Second Reading will not be taken this week.

MR. DALZIEL: This Bill is much too important to be rushed through by any Government. It is a Bill which I think ought to be carried with the general assent of the House, and not by mere catch party vote.

MR. LOGAN (Leicester, Harborough): What fell from the right hon. the Chancellor of the Exchequer has not satisfied me. As a man of business I should not for a single moment dream of putting my own money into the concern; I should refuse to take any shares in such a company; and I decline to invest the money of those I represent in it. We have been told over and over again that what we are taking from this company is a losing concern, and I cannot understand how the British taxpayer should be called upon to pay a large premium for the honour and glory of taking over a losing concern; particularly this year, when we have been compelled to dip into what is rightly called our "war chest" for the purpose of defraying the ordinary expenses of the year. We are told, if this transaction takes place the British people will acquire certain mineral rights. As a man of business, I have the greatest doubt as to whether the Niger Company are actuated by philanthropic notions in handing over these rights to the British people. If they have any real value at all, I am certain that the directors of the Niger Company would have kept them for themselves. We are told that there are sundry treaties with the natives which are to be acquired. I can fully bear out what the hon. Mem-

Mr. Dalziel.

ber for Northampton said as to how these treaties are obtained. I remember the bitter complaints of the natives of New Zealand as to the way in which they had been done out of their land for a trifling consideration. I am not concerned to obstruct the business of the House, but I say, as a man of business, I am entitled to further information as to why I should vote the money of those I represent. I hope the Government will reconsider the position, and adjourn the Debate for a day or so. If they do not, I believe the people of the country will not forget that at a time when we are so badly off for money that we cannot find any for old age pensions to the deserving poor, they cheerfully voted a million to a company who are going to hand over to us what they do not want.

SIR F. T. MAPPIN (York, W.R., Hallamshire): This is, in my opinion, the most extraordinary proposal I have ever heard of since I have been in the House. We are asked to vote £865,000 without any information whatever. I cannot suppose that any business man in the House could, from the information we have before us, venture to support such a motion. We have no statement as to the value of the steamboats or machinery, and I would earnestly ask the Government to postpone this motion until we have further information.

MR. W. ALLAN (Gateshead): The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer said that the Government were to take over from the Niger Company all the steamers, jetties, warehouses, plant, and machinery. May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if, in the Papers to be submitted to the House, the age, carrying capacity, and value of the steamers will be entered; and who valued them. Further, will the original value of the jetties be entered, and who valued them? Will the same information be given in regard to the warehouses, plant, and machinery? Practical questions like these, will I am sure, commend themselves to the business abilities of the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

***SIR M. HICKS-BEACH:** As I have already explained, a full schedule of the articles of various kinds to be taken over, with the prices, will be presented to the House. That schedule has been settled

by a small Committee on which was included Colonel Lugard, who is well acquainted with the country and the places named, and Sir Ralph Moor, who is also acquainted with the places. The values were arrived at by a comparison with the company's books, which I believe allow for depreciation in each case. The value fixed—£115,000—is considerably less than the price at which these articles appear on the company's books. I may explain that the valuation has not only been taken by reference to the company's books, but also from the personal knowledge of Colonel Lugard of the company's plant and machinery.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I am sorry that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has not acceded to the request for the postponement of the Debate. There is no option left but to move as an Amendment the deletion of the words "£865,000," with the view of inserting the words "£600,000."

*SIR M. HICKS-BEACH rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the question be now put."

Question put, "That the question be now put."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 216; Noes, 116. (Division List No. 212.)

AYES.

Aird, John
Allhusen, Augustus H. Eden
Allsopp, Hon. George
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arnold, Alfred
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Joceline FitzRoy
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Alfred
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manchester)
Balfour, Rt. Hon. Gerald W. (Leeds)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barnes, Frederic Gorell
Barry, Rt. Hon. A. H. S. (Hunts)
Barry, Sir F. T. (Windsor)
Bartley, George C. T.
Barton, Dunbar Plunket
Bathurst, Hon. Allen B.
Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Begg, Ferdinand Faithfull
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Beresford, Lord Charles
Bethell, Commander
Bhownagree, Sir M. M.
Bidolph, Michael
Blakiston-Houston, John
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex)
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brookfield, A. Montagu
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Batcher, John George
Campbell, Rt. Hon. J. A. (Glasgow)
Carile, William Walter
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbyshire)
Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, E.)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Bir.)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worce.)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Chelsea, Viscount
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready

Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Courtney, Rt. Hon. Leonard H.
Cox, Irwin Edw. Bainbridge
Cranborne, Viscount
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crutts, William Donaldson
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Curzon, Viscount
Dalbiac, Colonel Philip Hugh
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davies, Sir Horatio D. (Chat.)
Denny, Colonel
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Douglas-Pennant, Hon. E. S.
Doxford, William Theodore
Drucker, A.
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart
Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hon. Sir J. (Mancr.)
Finch, George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fison, Frederick William
Fitz Wygram, General Sir F.
Fletcher, Sir Henry
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Galloway, William Johnson
Garfit, William
Gedge, Sydney
Gibbs, Hon. A. G. H. (City of Lond.)
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Giles, Charles Tyrrell
Gilliat, John Saunders
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, Hon. John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Rt. Hon. G. J. (St. George's)
Graham, Henry Robert
Greene W. Raymond (Cambs.)
Gull, Sir Cameron
Gunter, Colonel
Hall, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Halsey, Thomas Frederick
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord Geo.
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robt. Wm.

Hardy, Laurence
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hatch, Ernest Frederick G.
Heath, James
Henderson, Alexander
Hermon-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hill, Arthur (Down, West)
Hill, Sir Edw. Stock (Bristol)
Hoare, E. Brodie (Hampstead)
Hoare, Samuel (Norwich)
Holland, Hon. Lionel R. (Bow)
Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
Houston, R. P.
Howard, Joseph
Howell, William Tudor
Hozier, Hon. J. H. Cecil
Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn
Hughes, Colonel Edwin
Hutton, John (Yorks, N.R.)
Jebb, Richard (Claverhouse)
Jenkins, Sir John Jones
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Lees
Laurie, Lieut. General
Lawrence, Sir Edmund (Corn)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
Lea, Sir Thomas (Londonderry)
Lecky, Rt. Hon. William E. H.
Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn (Swan.)
Lockwood, Lieut. Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Col. C. W. (Evesham)
Long, Rt. Hon. Walter (Liverpool)
Lorne, Marquess of
Lowe, Francis William
Lloyd, Archie Kirkman
Lubbock, Rt. Hon. Sir John
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
Macdonald, John Cumming
McArthur, Charles (Liverpool)
Malcolm, Ian
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Melville, Beresford Valentine

Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
 Middlesmore, J. Throgmorton
 Milton, Viscount
 Milward, Colonel Victor
 Moon, Edw. Robert Pacy
 Moore, William (Antrim, N.)
 More, Robt. Jasper (Shropshire)
 Morgan, Hn. F. (Mon'mthsh.)
 Morrell, George Herbert
 Murray, R Hn. A. Graham (Bute)
 Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
 Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
 Newdigate, Francis Alexander
 Nicholson, William Graham
 Pierpoint, Robert
 Pilkington, R. (Lancs. Newton)
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Priestley, Sir W. Overend (Edin.)
 Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
 Purvis, Robert
 Pym, C. Guy
 Rankin, Sir James

Richards, Henry Charles
 Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir M. W.
 Ritchie, Rt. Hon. C. Thomson
 Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
 Rothschild, Hon. Lionel W.
 Roysds, Clement Molyneux
 Russell, Gen. F. S. (Ch't'n'm)
 Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
 Ryder, John Herbert Dudley
 Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
 Seely, Charles Hilton
 Sharpe, William Edward T.
 Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
 Sidebottom, William (Derbysh.)
 Simeon, Sir Barrington
 Smith, James P. ((Lanarks.)
 Stanley, Hon. A. (Ormskirk)
 Stanley, Edward J. (Somerset)
 Stanley, Henry M. (Lambeth)
 Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
 Stewart, Sir Mark J. M Taggart
 Stirling-Maxwell, Sir J. M.
 Strauss, Arthur

Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
 Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
 Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Ox'd. Univ.)
 Tomlinson, Wm. E. Murray
 Tritton, Charles Ernest
 Valentia, Viscount
 Vincent, Col. Sir C. F. H.
 Wanklyn, James Leslie
 Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
 Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
 Whiteley, H. (Ashton-under-L)
 Whitmore, Charles Algernon
 Wilson J. W. (Worcestersh., N.)
 Wodehouse, Rt Hon E R (Bath)
 Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
 Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
 Wyndham, George
 Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
 Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy
 Young, Commander (Berks, E.)
TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
 Sir William Walrond and
 Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Allan, William (Gateshead)
 Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbert Hy.
 Bainbridge, Emerson
 Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
 Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
 Billson, Alfred
 Birrell, Augustine
 Bolton, Thomas Dolling
 Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn)
 Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
 Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
 Burns, John
 Buxton, Sydney Charles
 Caldwell, James
 Cameron, Sir Charles (Glasgow)
 Cawley, Frederick
 Channing, Francis Allston
 Clark, Dr. G. B. (Caithness-sh.)
 Clough, Walter Owen
 Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
 Curran, Thomas (Sligo, S.)
 Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan)
 Davitt, Michael
 Dewar, Arthur
 Dillon, John
 Donelan, Captain A.
 Doogan, P. C.
 Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
 Dunn, Sir William
 Ellis, John Edward
 Farquharson, Dr. Robert
 Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
 Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
 Flynn, James Christopher
 Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
 Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
 Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbt. John
 Gourley, Sir E. Tempeley
 Haldane, Richard Burdon
 Hedderwick, Thomas C. H.

Hemphill, Rt. Hon. C. H.
 Holland, Wm. H. (York, W.R.)
 Horniman, Frederick John
 Jacoby, James Alfred
 Joicey, Sir James
 Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)
 Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)
 Kay-Shuttleworth, Rt Hn Sir U
 Kearley, Hudson E.
 Kitson, Sir James
 Langley, Batty
 Leng, Sir John
 Lloyd-George, David
 Logan, John William
 Lough, Thomas
 Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
 Lyell, Sir Leonard
 Macaleese, Daniel
 M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
 M'Dermott, Patrick
 M'Ewan, William
 M'Kenna, Reginald
 M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
 M'Leod, John
 Mappin, Sir Frederick Thorpe
 Mellor, Rt. Hon. J. W. (Yorks.)
 Mendl, Sigismund Ferdinand
 Molloy, Bernard Charles
 Montagu, Sir S. (Whitechapel)
 Moulton, John Fletcher
 Nussey, Thomas Willans
 O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
 O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
 O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
 Oldroyd, Mark
 Palmer, Sir C. M. (Durham)
 Paulton, James Mellor
 Pickersgill, Edward Hare
 Pilkington, Sir. G. A. (Lancs)
 Pirie, Duncan V.

Power, Patrick Joseph
 Price, Robert John
 Priestley, Briggs (Yorks.)
 Randall, David
 Rickett, J. Compton
 Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
 Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
 Robson, William Snowdon
 Scott, Chas. Prestwich (Leigh)
 Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
 Sinclair, Capt. John (Forfarsh.)
 Smith, Samuel (Flint)
 Souttar, Robinson
 Stanhope, Hon. Phillip J.
 Steadman, William Charles
 Stevenson, Francis S.
 Strachey, Edward
 Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
 Tennant, Harold John
 Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
 Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan, E.)
 Trevelyan, Charles Phillips
 Wallace, Robert
 Walton, John L. (Leeds, S.)
 Wedderburn, Sir William
 Weir, James Galloway
 Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
 Williams, John Carvell (Notts.)
 Wilson, Charles Henry (Hull)
 Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
 Wilson, John (Govan)
 Woodall, William
 Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Hddersf'd)
 Woods, Samuel
 Young, Samuel (Cavan, East)
 Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
 Mr. T. P. O'Connor and Mr.
 Dalziel.

Original Question put accordingly.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 223 ; Noes, 101. (Division List No. 213.)

AYES.

Aird, John
 Allhusen, Augustus Henry E.
 Allsopp, Hon. George
 Archdale, Edward Mervyn
 Arnold, Alfred
 Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
 Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
 Bagot, Captain J. Fitzroy
 Baird, John George A.
 Balcarres, Lord
 Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Man.)
 Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W. (Leeds)
 Banbury, Frederick George
 Barnes, Frederic Gorell
 Barry, Rt. Hon. A. H. S. (Hunts)
 Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
 Bartley, George C. T.
 Barton, Dunbar Plunket
 Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
 Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
 Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
 Begg, Ferdinand Faithfull
 Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
 Beresford, Lord Charles
 Bethell, Commander
 Blownagree, Sir M. M.
 Biddulph, Michael
 Blakiston-Houston, John
 Blundell, Colonel Henry
 Bowcawen, Arthur Griffith
 Bowles, Capt. H. F. (Middlesex)
 Brassey, Albert
 Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
 Brookfield, A. Montagu
 Butcher, John George
 Campbell, Rt. Hon. J. A. (Glasgow)
 Carlile, William Walter
 Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
 Cavendish, V. C. W. (Derbysh.)
 Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, East)
 Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm)
 Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worce.)
 Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
 Charrington, Spencer
 Chelsea, Viscount
 Clare, Octavius Leigh
 Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
 Cohen, Benjamin Louis
 Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
 Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
 Compton, Lord Alwyne
 Corbett A. Cameron (Glasgow)
 Cornwallis, Fiennes Stanley W.
 Courtney, Rt. Hon. L. H.
 Cox, Irwin Edw. Bainbridge
 Cranborne, Viscount
 Cripps, Charles Alfred
 Cruddas, William Donaldson
 Cubitt, Hon. Henry
 Curzon, Viscount
 Dalbiac, Colonel Philip Hugh
 Dalrymple, Sir Charles
 Davies, Sir H. D. (Chatham)
 Denny, Colonel
 Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
 Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
 Douglas-Pennant, Hon. E. S.
 Doxford, William Theodore
 Drucker, A.
 Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir W. H.
 Egerton, Hon. A. de Tatton
 Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph D.
 Fardell, Sir T. George
 Fellowes, Hon. Alwyn Edwd.
 Ferguson, Rt. Hon. Sir J. (Man.)

Finch, George H.
 Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
 Fisher, William Hayes
 Fison, Frederick William
 FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose-
 FitzWygram, General Sir F.
 Fletcher, Sir Henry
 Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
 Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
 Galloway, William Johnson
 Garfit, William
 Gedde, Sydney
 Gibbs, Hn. AGH. (City of Lond.)
 Gibbs, Hn. Vicary (St. Albans)
 Giles, Charles Tyrrell
 Gilliat, John Saunders
 Goldsworthy, Major-General
 Gordon, Hon. John Edward
 Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
 Goschen, Rt. Hon. G. (St. George's)
 Graham, Henry Robert
 Greene, W. Raymond. (Cambs.)
 Gull, Sir Cameron
 Gunter, Colonel
 Hall, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
 Halsey, Thomas Frederick
 Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord George
 Hanbury, Rt. Hon. R. W.
 Hardy, Laurence
 Hare, Thomas Leigh
 Haslett, Sir James Horner
 Hatch, Ernest Frederick G.
 Heath, James
 Heaton, John Henniker
 Henderson, Alexander
 Hill, Arthur (Down, West)
 Hill, Sir E. Stock (Bristol)
 Hoare, Ed. Brodie (Hampstead)
 Hoare, Samuel (Norwich)
 Holland, Hon. L. R. (Bow)
 Houldsworth, Sir Wm. Henry
 Houston, R. P.
 Howard, Joseph
 Howell, William Tudor
 Hozier, Hn. James Henry Cecil
 Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn
 Hughes, Colonel Edwin
 Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)
 Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
 Jenkins, Sir John Jones
 Johnston, William (Belfast)
 Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
 Keswick, William
 King, Sir Henry Seymour
 Knowles, Lees
 Laurie, Lieut.-General
 Lawrence, Sir E. Durning- (Corn)
 Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
 Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
 Lea, Sir Thomas (Londonderry)
 Lecky, Rt. Hon. Wm. Edw. H.
 Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn- (Swansea)
 Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
 Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
 Long, Col. C. W. (Evesham)
 Long, Rt. Hon. Walter (L'pool.)
 Lorne, Marquess of
 Lowe, Francis William
 Loyd, Archie Kirkman
 Lubbock, Rt. Hon. Sir John
 Lucas-Shadwell, William
 Macartney, W. G. Ellison
 Macdonald, John Cumming
 MacArthur, Charles (Liverpool)
 Malcolm, Ian

Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
 Melville, Beresford V. a. entine.
 Meysse-Thompson, Sir H. M.
 Middlemore, Jno. Throgmorton
 Milton, Viscount
 Milward, Colonel Victor
 Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants)
 Moon, Edward Robert Percy
 Moore, William (Antrim, N.)
 More, Robert J. (Shropshire)
 Morgan, Hn. F. (Monmouthsh.)
 Morrell, George Herbert
 Murray, Rt. Hon. A. Graham. (Bute)
 Murray, C. J. (Coventry)
 Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
 Newdigate, Francis Alexander
 Nicholson, William Graham
 Pierpoint, Robert
 Pilkington, R. (Lancs. Newron)
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Priestley, Sir W. O. (Edin.)
 Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. E.
 Purvis, Robert
 Pym, C. Guy
 Rankin, Sir James
 Richards, Henry Charles
 Rickett, J. Compton
 Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir Matthew W.
 Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
 Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
 Rothschild, Hon. Lionel W.
 Roys, Clement Molyneux
 Russell, Gen. F. S. (Cheltenham)
 Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
 Ryder, John Herbert Dudley
 Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
 Seely, Charles Hilton
 Sharpe, William Edward T.
 Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
 Sidebottom, William (Derbysh.)
 Simeon, Sir Barrington
 Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.)
 Stanley, Hon. A. (Ormskirk)
 Stanley, Edward J. (Somerset)
 Stanley, Henry M. (Lambeth)
 Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
 Stewart, Sir Mark J. M. Taggart
 Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
 Strauss, Arthur
 Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
 Sturt, Hon. Humphrey Napier
 Talbot, Rt. Hon. J. G. (Oxf. Univ.)
 Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
 Trevelyan, Charles Philips
 Tritton, Charles Ernest
 Valentia, Viscount
 Wanklyn James Leslie
 Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
 Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
 Whiteley, H. (Asht'n-under-L.)
 Whitmore, Charles Algernon
 Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
 Wodehouse, Rt. Hon. E. R. (Bath)
 Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
 Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
 Wyndham, George
 Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
 Wyvill, Marnaduke D'Aicy
 Young, Commander (Berks, E.)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
 Sir William Walrond and
 Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Allen, W. (Newc. under Lyme)
 Bainbridge, Emerson
 Billson, Alfred
 Birrell, Augustine
 Bolton, Thomas Dolling
 Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
 Burns, John
 Caldwell, James
 Cameron, Sir Ch. (Glasgow)
 Cawley, Frederick
 Channing, Francis Allston
 Clark, Dr. G. B. (Caithness-sh)
 Clough, Walter Owen
 Curran, Thos. B. (Donegal)
 Curran, Thomas (Cligo, S.)
 Dalziel, James Henry
 Davies, M. V. (Cardigan)
 Davitt, Michael
 Dewar, Arthur
 Dillon, John
 Donelan, Captain A.
 Doogan, P. C.
 Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
 Dunn, Sir William
 Ellis, John Edward
 Farquharson, Dr. Robert
 Flynn, James Christopher
 Foster, Sir W. (Derby Co.)
 Gourley, Sir Edward Temperley
 Hedderwick, Thomas C. H.
 Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Chas. H.
 Holland, W. H. (York, W.R.)
 Horniman, Frederick John
 Jacoby, James Alfred
 Jones, D. Brynmor (Swansea)

Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)
 Kearley, Hudson, E.
 Kitson, Sir James
 Langley, Batty
 Leng, Sir John
 Lewis, John Herbert
 Lloyd-George, David
 Lough, Thomas
 Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
 Lyell, Sir Leonard
 MacAleese, Daniel
 McDermott, Patrick
 McEwan, William
 McKenna, Reginald
 McLaren, Charles Benjamin
 McLeod, John
 Mappin, Sir Frederick Thorpe
 Mendl, Sigismund Ferdinand
 Molloy, Bernard Charles
 Montagu, Sir S. (Whitechapel)
 Moulton, John Fletcher
 Nussey, Thomas Willans
 O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
 O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
 O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
 O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
 Oldroyd, Mark
 Palmer, Sir Charles M. (Durham)
 Pickersgill, Edward Hare
 Pilkington, Sir G. A. (Lancs SW)
 Pirie, Duncan V.
 Power, Patrick Joseph
 Price, Robert John
 Priestley, Briggs (Yorks.)
 Randell, David

Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
 Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
 Robson, William Snowdon
 Scott, Chas. Prestwich (Leigh)
 Shaw, Thomas (Hawick, B.)
 Sinclair, Capt. John (Forfarsh.)
 Smith, Samuel (Flint)
 Souttar, Robinson
 Stanhope, Hon. Philip J.
 Steadman, William Charles
 Stevenson, Francis S.
 Strachey, Edward
 Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
 Tennant, Harold John
 Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen E.)
 Thomas, Alfred (Glamorgan E.)
 Thomas, David Alf. (Merthyr)
 Wallace, Robert
 Walton, J. Lawson (Leeds, S.)
 Warner, Thos. Courtenay T.
 Wedderburn, Sir William
 Weir, James Galloway
 Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
 Williams, John Carvell (Notts.)
 Wilson, Charles Henry (Hull)
 Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
 Wilson, John (Govan)
 Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Huddersfd)
 Woods, Samuel
 Young, Samuel (Cavan, East)
 Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
 Mr. Thomas Bayley and
 Mr. Logan.

Resolved, that it is expedient to authorise the issue, out of the Consolidated Fund, of sums not exceeding £865,000, and, for the purpose of providing money for such issue, the borrowing, by means of terminable annuities charged on and paid out of the moneys annually provided by Parliament for Foreign and Colonial Services, and, if those moneys are insufficient, out of the Consolidated Fund, a sum of not exceeding £820,000, for making payments to the Royal Niger Company, in consideration of the transfer to the Crown of the administrative powers of the said Company, together with their treaty and other rights and property, and for meeting expenditure rendered necessary by such transfer.

Resolution to be reported To-morrow.

SMALL HOUSES (ACQUISITION OF OWNERSHIP) BILL.

As amended (by the Standing Committee), further considered.

COLONEL MILWARD (Warwick, Stratford-on-Avon): I beg to move the Amendment which stands in my name on the

Paper. The object of the Amendment is to increase the scope and usefulness of the Bill, which I believe it does very largely.

Amendment proposed :

"In page 5, line 40, to leave out the words 'and containing,' and insert the words, 'or of any rural district, containing respectively.'—(Colonel Milward)—instead thereof."

Question proposed, "That the words 'and containing' stand part of the Bill."

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I am not a supporter of this Bill, for reasons which will I give on the Third Reading; but of course we ought to discuss it from the point of view of making it workable. If we accept the Amendment, however, we shall be making every county a patchwork for the purposes of this Bill, which will be administered in one way in one portion of the county and in quite another way in another portion. There is no reason why a different system should be adopted, but if we introduce this Amendment, the very patchwork system which we have with partial success tried to put an end to will be introduced again.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): I do not deny that this Amendment will add slightly to the existing complications to which my right hon. friend refers, but, on the other hand, the advantage of it is so great that I think there can be no doubt as the decision to which the House ought to come. It is precisely in those rural districts found in the neighbourhood of large towns, to which there is a tendency on the part of the working classes to congregate, owing to cheap train and tram facilities, that the operation of the Act will be most beneficial. The Amendment proposes to give the councils of those rural districts the option of putting the Act into operation, and I therefore support it.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE (Wilts, Cricklade): I do not wish to repeat over again the arguments which I addressed to the House last week, and which have been put forward by my right hon. friend the Member for the Forest of Dean, but I cannot allow this Amendment to be adopted, as no doubt it will be, without renewing my most emphatic protest against the Bill in its present shape. I could have understood

the action of the right hon. Gentleman if he had entirely discarded the county jurisdiction, or if he had kept the Bill in its original shape and retained the jurisdiction of the county councils in the counties. But I do not understand with what authority he says that districts above 7,000 population are nearly all to be found in the neighbourhood of large towns. From such experience as I have had, many districts which are above 7,000 population are large scattered rural districts, and even above 7,000, 10,000, and even 20,000, there are large districts which are purely rural in character. I must therefore say, with all the respect that I have for the right hon. Gentleman, as one of our greatest authorities upon municipal government, I think he is entirely wrong in this matter. I do not want, myself, to put the House to another Division, but I can only say that I think this arrangement is so objectionable that, if a Division is taken, I shall certainly go into the Lobby against it.

Question put.

The House divided :—Ayes, 96 ; Noes, 188. (Division List, No. 214.)

AYES.

Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, W. (Newc.-under-Lyme)
Asquith, Rt. Hon. H. Henry
Bainbridge, Emerson
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Billson, Alfred
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, John
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Sir Charles (Glasgow)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Cawley, Frederick
Clark, Dr. G. B. (Caithness-sh.)
Clough, Walter Owen
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Curran, Thomas (Sligo, S.)
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan)
Davitt, Michael
Dewar, Arthur
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Dunn, Sir William
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Foster, Sir W. (Derby Co.)
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Gladstone, Rt. Hon. H. J.
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gourley, Sir Edward Temperley

Hedderwick, Thos. Charles H.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Chas. H.
Holland, Wm. H. (York, W.R.)
Horniman, Frederick John
Jacoby, James Alfred
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, David B. (Swansea)
Jones, William (Carnarvonsh.)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kitson, Sir James
Langley, Batty
Leng, Sir John
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Logan, John William
Lough, Thomas
Lyell, Sir Leonard
MacAleese, Daniel
M'Arthur, William (Cornwall)
M'Dermott, Patrick
M'Ewan, William
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
M'Leod, John
Mellor, Rt. Hon. J. W. (Yorks.)
Mendl, Sigismund Ferdinand
Moss, Samuel
Moulton, John Fletcher
O'Brien, J. F. X. (Cork)
O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
Oldroyd, Mark
Paulton, James Mellor

Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Randell, David
Rickett, J. Compton
Robson, William Snowdon
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sinclair, Capt. J. (Forfarshire)
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Souttar, Robinson
Stanhope, Hon. Philip J.
Steadman, William Charles
Strachey, Edward
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, A. (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas, A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David Alf. (Merthyr)
Wallace, Robert
Walton, John L. (Leeds, S.)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wedderburn, Sir William
Weir, James Galloway
Williams, John Carvell (Notts-)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Govan)
Woodall, William
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Huddersf'd)
Woods, Samuel
Young, Samuel (Cavan, East)
Yoxall, James Henry
TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Sir Charles Dilke and Lord
Edmond Fitzmaurice.

NOES.

Aird, John
 Allhusen, Augustus H. Eden
 Allsopp, Hon. George
 Archdale, Edward Mervyn
 Arnold, Alfred
 Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
 Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
 Bagot, Capt. Joceline FitzRoy
 Baird, John G. Alexander
 Balcarras, Lord
 Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (Manch'r
 Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (Leeds)
 Banbury, Frederick George
 Barnes, Frederic Gorell
 Barry, Rt. Hn. A. H. S. (Hunts.)
 Barry, Sir Francis T. (Windsor)
 Bartley, George C. T.
 Barton, Dunbar Plunket
 Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Br'st'l)
 Begg, Ferdinand Faithfull
 Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
 Beresford, Lord Charles
 Bhownaggee, Sir M. M.
 Blakiston-Houston, John
 Blundell, Colonel Henry
 Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn)
 Brassey, Albert
 Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
 Campbell, Rt. Hn. J. A. (Glasgow
 Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
 Cecil, E. (Hertford, East)
 Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Bir.
 Chamberlain, J. A. (Worc'r)
 Channing, Francis Allston
 Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
 Charrington, Spencer
 Chelsea, Viscount
 Clare, Octavius Leigh
 Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
 Cohen, Benjamin Louis
 Colomb, Sir John C. Ready
 Colston, Chas. Ed. H. Athole
 Compton, Lord Alwyne
 Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
 Cornwallis, F. Stanley W.
 Courtney, Rt. Hon. L. H.
 Cranborne, Viscount
 Cripps, Charles Alfred
 Cruddas, William Donaldson
 Cubitt, Hon. Henry
 Curzon, Viscount
 Dalbiac, Colonel Philip Hugh
 Dalrymple, Sir Charles
 Davies, Sir H. D. (Chatham)
 Denny, Colonel
 Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
 Donkin, Richard Sim
 Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
 Douglas-Pennant, Hon. E. S.
 Doxford, William Theodore
 Drucker, A.
 Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir W. Hart
 Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
 Fellor, Sir T. George

Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
 Fergusson, Rt. Hon. Sir J. (Man)
 Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
 Fisher, William Hayes
 FitzGerald, Sir Robt. Penrose-
 FitzWygram, General Sir F.
 Fletcher, Sir Henry
 Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
 Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
 Galloway, Wm. Johnson
 Garfit, William
 Gedge, Sydney
 Gibbs, Hn. Vicary (St. Albans)
 Giles, Charles Tyrrell
 Gilliat, John Saunders
 Goldsworthy, Major-General
 Gordon, Hon. John Edward
 Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
 Goschen, Rt. Hn. G. J. (St. George's
 Greene, W. Raymond- (Cambs.
 Gull, Sir Cameron
 Halsey, Thomas Frederick
 Hamilton, Rt. Hn. Lord George
 Hanbury, Rt. Hon. R. Wm.
 Haslett, Sir James Horner
 Hatch, Ernest Fred. G.
 Heath, James
 Henderson, Alexander
 Hermon-Hodge, Robt. Trotter
 Hill, Arthur (Down, West)
 Hill, Sir Edward Stock (Bristol)
 Hoare, Samuel (Norwich)
 Holland, Hon. L. R. (Bow)
 Houston, R. P.
 Howard, Joseph
 Howell, William Tudor
 Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn
 Hughes, Colonel Edwin
 Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
 Jenkins, Sir John Jones
 Johnston, William (Belfast)
 Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
 Keswick, William
 Kimber, Henry
 Knowles, Lees
 Laurie, Lieut.-General
 Lawrence, Sir E. Durning- (Corn
 Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
 Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
 Lecky, Rn. Hon. W. E. H.
 Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn (Swansea
 Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
 Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
 Long, Col. Charles W. (Evesham
 Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Liverpool
 Lorne, Marquess of
 Lowe, Francis William
 Loyd, Archie Kirkman
 Lubbock, Rt. Hon. Sir John
 Lucas-Shadwell, William
 Macartney, W. G. Ellison
 Macdonald, John Cumming
 MacArthur, Charles (Liverpool)
 Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)

Melville, Beresford V.
 Middlemore, John Throgmorton
 Milton, Viscount
 Milward, Colonel Victor
 Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants.
 Moon, Edward R. Pacy
 Moore, William (Antrim, N.)
 More, R. J. (Shropshire)
 Morgan, Hn. F. (Monm'thsh.)
 Morrell, George Herbert
 Murray, Rt. Hn. A. G. (Bute)
 Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
 Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
 Newdigate, Francis Alexander
 Nicholson, William Graham
 Pierpoint, Robert
 Pilkington, R. (Lancs. Newton)
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Priestley, Sir W. O. (Edinburgh
 Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Edw. Edward
 Purvis, Robert
 Pym, C. Guy
 Richards, Henry Charles
 Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir M. W.
 Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chs. Thomson
 Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
 Roys, Clement Molyneux
 Russell, Gen. F. S. (Cheltenham
 Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
 Ryder, J. H. Dudley
 Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
 Seely, Charles Hilton
 Sharpe, William Edward T.
 Sidebottom, Wm. (Derbysh.)
 Simeon, Sir Barrington
 Smith, James Parker (Lanarks.
 Stanley, Edward J. (Somerset)
 Stanley, Henry M. (Lambeth)
 Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
 Stewart, Sir Mark J. M. Taggart
 Strauss, Arthur
 Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
 Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
 Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxf'd Uni.
 Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
 Trevelyan, Charles Philips
 Tritton, Charles Ernest
 Valentia, Viscount
 Wanklyn, James Leslie
 Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
 Wharton, Rt. Hon. J. Lloyd
 Whiteley, H. (Ashton-u.-L.)
 Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
 Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
 Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bth.)
 Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
 Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
 Wyndham, George
 Young, Commander (Berks, E.)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir
 William Walrond and Mr.
 Anstruther.

MR. STRACHEY (Somerset S.): I beg to move an Amendment which is not upon the paper. It is in Clause 9, page 6, line 1, to leave out the third word in the line, which is "seven," and to insert instead the word "five." I doubt the utility of the Bill myself, but at the same

time if there is to be a Bill at all, we are all agreed that it should be made as perfect and useful as possible, and if this Bill is to be regarded as a useful measure in the West of England, it will have to apply to urban populations of less than 7,000. There are many urban district

populations far below that number, and unless the Bill is amended in this respect it will not be of much use in those parts of the country.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 6, line 1, to leave out the word 'seven,' and insert the word 'five'— (*Mr. Strachey*)—instead thereof."

Question proposed, "That the word 'seven' stand part of the Bill."

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I differ from the view taken by the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Somerset. This matter was discussed at great length in Committee, when it was suggested that the figure should be increased to 10,000; the matter was discussed at considerable length, and eventually 7,000 was adopted as a compromise, and I think it was a fair one and might be left where it stands.

MR. WARNER (Stafford, Lichfield): I am sorry the right hon. Gentleman has taken the view he has with regard to this Amendment, because there are many districts of this character in all parts of England where people require houses. Where a Bill of this kind will be required to be put in force, the districts are very populous in a way, but the population does not reach 7,000. Nevertheless, these are the places where houses are wanted, and where men will buy land and put up their own houses. These are districts which ought to be encouraged, and therefore I shall vote for the Amendment.

MR. McLAREN (Leicestershire, Bosworth): I represent a county in which there are a large number of rural districts which are rapidly acquiring urban powers, and many of these districts are in the same position as that referred to by the

hon. Member for Lichfield. These places are inhabited by thrifty men, who earn good wages and who pay no rates, and who, if they had the opportunity, would build houses for themselves. I think something might be done to encourage such localities as these. If it is left to the municipal councils, in many cases nothing will be done; and, for my part, if the hon. Member who moves the Amendment goes to a Division, he will receive my strong support.

***MR. McKENNA** (Monmouth, N.): I also am one of those who do not believe that the Bill will be a success. I believe the cost will be very considerable, and that the work would be better done by private enterprise. At the same time, I think the cost is less likely to be excessive if this work is undertaken by small local authorities than if it is undertaken by the county councils. What is likely to happen is that a county council, having once attempted to carry out the provisions of this Bill, and having found it exceedingly costly, will refuse to have anything further to do with it. The small local authorities would, no doubt, be anxious to try the measure, but they would be unable to do so unless the Amendment of my hon. friend is carried. I would also point out to the right hon. Gentleman that the population of the local areas may be subject to a rise and fall of as much as 1000 in five years, and if the population fell below 7000 I should like to know whether the local authority would cease to be the authority for the purposes of this Bill. That is one of the simple details of the measure which the right hon. Gentleman has never considered, and never attempted to answer.

The House divided—Ayes, 168; Noes, 90. (Division List, No. 215.)

AYES.

Aird, John
Allhusen, Augustus Henry E.
Allsopp, Hon. George
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Arnold, Alfred
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzR.
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manch'r)
Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W. (Leeds)
Bambury, Frederick George
Barnes, Frederic Gorell
Barry, Rt. Hon. A. H. Smith—(Hunts)

Bartley, George C. T.
Barton, Dunbar Plunket
Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Begg, Ferdinand Faithfull
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Beresford, Lord Charles
Bhownaggee, Sir M. M.
Blakiston-Houston, John
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn)
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lincs.)
Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, East)
Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.

Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r)
Channing, Francis Allston
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Chelsea, Viscount
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Courtney, Rt. Hon. Leonard H.
Cranborne, Viscount

Cruddas, William Donaldson
 Cubitt, Hon. Henry
 Curzon, Viscount
 Dalkeith, Earl of
 Dalrymple, Sir Charles
 Davies, Sir Horatio D. (Chatham)
 Denny, Colonel
 Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
 Donkin, Richard Sun
 Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
 Doxford, William Theodore
 Drucker, A.
 Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart
 Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
 Fardell, Sir T. George
 Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
 Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
 Fisher, William Hayes
 FitzWygram, General Sir F.
 Fletcher, Sir Henry
 Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
 Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
 Garfit, William
 Gedge, Sydney
 Gibbs, Hn. Vicary (St. Albans)
 Giles, Charles Tyrrell
 Gilliat, John Saunders
 Goldsworthy, Major General
 Gordon, Hon. John Edward
 Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
 Goschen, Rt. Hon. G. J. (St. Geo's
 Gull, Sir Cameron
 Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord Geo.
 Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robt. Wm.
 Haslett, Sir James Horner
 Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
 Heath, James
 Henderson, Alexander
 Hill, Arthur (Down, West)
 Hill, Sir Edward Stock (Bristol)
 Hoare, Samuel (Norwich)
 Holland, Hon. Lionel R. (Bow)
 Houston, R. P.

Howard, Joseph
 Howell, William Tudor
 Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn
 Hughes, Colonel Edwin
 Hutton, John (Yorks, N.R.)
 Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
 Jenkins, Sir John Jones
 Johnston, William (Belfast)
 Keswick, William
 Kimber, Henry
 Laurie, Lieut.-General
 Lawrence, Sir E. Durning- (Corn.)
 Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
 Lawson, John Grant (Yorks.)
 Lecky, Rt. Hon. William Edw. H.
 Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn (Sw'nsea)
 Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
 Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
 Long, Col. C. W. (Evesham)
 Long, Rt. Hon. Walter (L'pool)
 Lorne, Marquess of
 Lowe, Francis William
 Loyd, Archie Kirkman
 Lucas-Shadwell, William
 Macartney, W. G. Ellison
 Macdonald, John Cumming
 McArthur, Charles (Liverpool)
 Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
 Middlemore, John Throgmort.
 Milton, Viscount
 Milward, Colonel Victor
 Montagu, Hon. J. S. (Hants.)
 Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
 More, Robert J. (Shropshire)
 Morgan, Hn. Fred. (Monm'thsh)
 Morrell, George Herbert
 Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford)
 Murray, Rt. Hon. A. Graham (Bute)
 Murray, Chas. J. (Coventry)
 Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
 Newdigate, Francis Alexander
 Nicholson, William Graham
 Nicol, Donald Ninian

Parkes, Ebenezer
 Pierpoint, Robert
 Pilkington, Rich. (Lancs. S.W.)
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
 Purvis, Robert
 Pym, C. Guy
 Richards, Henry Charles
 Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir Matthew W.
 Ritchie, Rt. Hon. C. Thompson
 Rollitt, Sir Albert Kaye
 Roys, Clement Molyneux
 Russell, Gen. F. S. (Chelt'h'm)
 Russell, T. W. (Tyronne)
 Ryder, John H. Dudley
 Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
 Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
 Seely, Charles Hilton
 Sharpe, William Edward T.
 Sidebottom, William (Derbys.)
 Simeon, Sir Barrington
 Smith, James P. (Lanarks.)
 Stanley, E. J. (Somerset)
 Stanley, H. M. (Lambeth)
 Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
 Stewart, Sir Mark J. M. Taggart
 Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
 Talbot, Rt. Hon. J. G.
 Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
 Valencia, Viscount
 Wanklyn, James Leslie
 Wharton, Rt. Hon. J. Lloyd
 Whiteley, H. (Ashton-under-L.)
 Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
 Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
 Wodehouse, Rt. Hon. E. R. (Bath)
 Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
 Wyndham, George
 Young, Commander (Berks, E.)
TELLERS FOR THE AYES.—
 Sir William Walrod and
 Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Allan, William (Gateshead)
 Allen, Wm. (Newc.-un'r-Lyme)
 Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
 Billson, Alfred
 Bolton, Thomas Dolling
 Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
 Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
 Burns, John
 Buxton, Sydney Charles
 Caldwell, James
 Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
 Causton, Richard Knight
 Cawley, Frederick
 Clark, Dr. G. B. (Caithness-sh.)
 Clough, Walter Owen
 Crilly, Daniel
 Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
 Curran, Thomas (Sligo, S.)
 Dalziel, James Henry
 Davies, M. Vaughan- (Cardig'n)
 Dewar, Arthur
 Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
 Dillon, John
 Donelan, Captain A.
 Doogan, P. C.
 Dunn, Sir William
 Ellis, John Edward
 Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
 Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
 Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
 Galloway, William Johnson

Gladstone, Rt. Hon. Herbt. John
 Goddard, Daniel Ford
 Grey, Sir Edward (Berwick)
 Hedderwick, Thomas Charles H.
 Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
 Holland, Wm. H. (York, W. R.)
 Horniman, Frederick John
 Jacoby, James Alfred
 Joicey, Sir James
 Jones, David B. (Swansea)
 Jones, W. (Carnarvonshire)
 Kearley, Hudson E.
 Kitson, Sir James
 Leese, Sir J. F. (Accrington)
 Leng, Sir John
 Logan, John William
 Lyell, Sir Leonard
 Macaleese, Daniel
 McKenna, Reginald
 McLaren, C. Benjamin
 McLeod, John
 Mellor, Rt. Hon. J. W. (Yorks.)
 Mendl, Sigismund F.
 Moore, William (Antrim, N.)
 Moss, Samuel
 Moulton, John Fletcher
 O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
 O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
 Paulton, James Mellor
 Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
 Pickersgill, Edward Hare

Power, Patrick Joseph
 Randell, David
 Rickett, J. Compton
 Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
 Robson, William Snowdon
 Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
 Sinclair, Capt. J. (Forfarshire)
 Smith, Samuel (Flint)
 Souttar, Robinson
 Stanhope, Hon. Philip J.
 Steadman, William Charles
 Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
 Tennant, Harold John
 Thomas, A. (Carmarthen, E.)
 Thomas, A. (Glamorgan, E.)
 Thomas, David Alfd. (Merthyr)
 Trevelyan, Charles Philips
 Wallace, Robert
 Walton, John L. (Leeds, S.)
 Wedderburn, Sir William
 Weir, James Galloway
 Williams, J. Carvell (Notts.)
 Wilson, H. J. (York, W. R.)
 Wilson, John (Govan)
 Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
 Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Hud'r'sf'd)
 Woods, Samuel
 Yoxall, James Henry
TELLERS FOR THE NOES.—
 Mr. Strachey and Mr.
 Warner.

Other Amendments made.

should be perfectly willing to withdraw my Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 6, line 6, after the first word 'county,' to insert the words 'as a special purpose.'"—(*Sir Edward Sassoon.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

THE SOLICITOR-GENERAL (Sir R. B. FINLAY, Inverness Burghs): I hope my hon. friend will not press this Amendment. He will see that a later Amendment in the name of the Colonial Secretary carries out the object he has in view. If the Amendment which has been moved were carried it would cause absolute confusion in the working of the Act, as if the county council is to raise the rate as a rate for a special purpose, you would also need to show in respect of what district that special purpose is to be taken as applying, so long as it is worked by the county council. The county council has in view the whole county, and the only case in which you want to limit the application of the rate is where certain parts of the county have adopted the Act, and that case is provided for in the Amendment of the Colonial Secretary.

LORD EDMOND FITZMAURICE: I am rather inclined to the view that the Solicitor-General is correct. It has been urged that when you get into the region of special rates and special purposes, the more districts you allow to be "punched" out of the county area the greater will be the number of special accounts. In view of the principle which has been adopted, all that has to be done is to settle what is the correct way of expressing that principle. So far as I am able to judge, the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill is sufficient, but it may be an open question whether an express declaration of some kind that there should be a special rate may not be necessary. On the whole, I am disposed to think that the words which follow the general scheme of other Acts of Parliament bearing on this matter are sufficient.

MR. M'KENNA: The matter has been made so clear by the hon. Member opposite that I am surprised there should be any doubt on the subject. In the case

*SIR E. SASSOON (Hythe): The aim of the Amendment I now move is rather the reverse of the Amendments which have been accepted. While they were directed towards safeguarding the interest of the county councils, my Amendment wishes to prevent any expenditure that might be incurred, or any loss that might accrue to county councils in consequence of their adopting this Act, being thrown upon the general county rate, and consequently upon the constituent contributors, whoever they may be. Under Section 68 of the Local Government Act, 1888, county councils have two funds—one known as the "General Purposes Fund," raised by means of rates levied upon the whole of the districts under the control and jurisdiction of the county council, and the other known as the "Special Purposes Fund," raised by means of rates levied on individual portions of the county for special purposes in those portions. This clause declares that the whole of the expenditure should be placed on the county rate, which I presume to be the General Purposes Fund. The effect will be to create this anomaly, that urban districts that have adopted this Act and incurred expenses under it, and urban districts who refuse to adopt the Act, will both have to bear the expenses which their county council incurs in consequence of adopting the Act. Assume that Folkestone chooses to adopt the Act, that Dover does not, that Canterbury equally does not, but that a resident of Canterbury, desiring to avail himself of the benefits of the Act, makes an application to the Kent County Council to advance him the money necessary to enable him to acquire his dwelling. If the whole expenses incident to the working of the Act are to be thrown on the general rate, to which both Folkestone and Dover are contributors, the effect will be that Folkestone will have incurred a double expense, and that Dover would have a certain charge upon it; whereas, if the expenses were thrown on the special rate, Canterbury, and Canterbury alone, who would benefit by the working of the Act, would be saddled with the whole of the expense. If my right hon. friend concurs in the expediency of avoiding this anomaly, but considers the object would be better secured by any other method, I

given by the hon. Member, if the Amendment of the Colonial Secretary is adopted, Folkestone, which becomes the local authority for the purposes of the Act, is excepted from the Act, pays its own expenses, and bears no part of the county rate; Dover, which does not except itself and does not make use of the Act, has to bear part of the expense of the Act which is set in motion at Canterbury, Canterbury not becoming the local authority for the purposes of the Act. We, therefore, see that the two Amendments are not the same. If they were, the result would be that Dover, which does not make use of the Act or become the local authority for the purposes of the Act, would not have to contribute to the county rate for the purposes of Canterbury, which also is supposed not to be the local authority for the purposes of the Act, but yet makes use of it. It seems to be more reasonable that each town should bear the cost of its own working of the Act, and one of the three towns should not be allowed to impose the expenses of the working of the Act upon the whole of the county excepting those parts which had taken over the Act for themselves.

*SIR E. SASSOON: In consequence of the appeal which has been made to me by my hon. and learned friend, and the difficulties foreshadowed in the working of this Amendment by the noble lord the member for Cricklade, I beg to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Other Amendments made.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 6, line 9, at end, to insert 'but no sum shall be raised in any urban or rural district the council of which becomes a local authority for the purposes of this Act on account of the expenses of a county council under this Act.'"—(*Mr. Secretary Chamberlain.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: The question arises here as to how far this privilege will be used for the purpose of blocking the operation of the Act. A number of districts may nominally adopt the Act, and then do nothing at all under it. That is a real danger. We are legislating somewhat in the dark upon the whole subject, as we have no return before us

Mr. McKenna.

showing what are the populations of the urban and rural districts of this country. I am afraid a great number of districts will nominally adopt the Act for the purpose of doing nothing.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: That is a very serious imputation on local government. I do not at all suppose that any district will follow the Machiavellian policy of deliberately adopting the Act in order to avoid being called upon to pay a share in the expenses of the county. That is really too absurd an argument to be put forward seriously. The population of the districts is supposed to have some authority in the matter, so that if they wanted to have the Act carried out they would force their local authority to proceed.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: I am assuming they did not want the Act carried out.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Does the population go for nothing? In that case it is quite undesirable that the local authorities should force the carrying out of the Act against the wishes of the people. I desire that local government should be in the truest sense of the word "executive," and if the population did not desire to take advantage of the Act the local authority should not proceed with it.

MR. R. WALLACE (Perth): Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will tell us exactly whether by passing a resolution of this kind, constituting themselves the local authority under the Act, a district would escape a liability for the general rate to which they otherwise would be liable. That would be an inducement to many districts to adopt the Act.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I do not think the hon. Member followed my answer. It is true that if they adopt the Act they will be excluded from any expenses which may be incurred by the county council. We believe that in the vast majority of cases the Act is so constituted that it may be carried out without expense to the local authority. But putting that aside, and assuming there will be an expense, no doubt by adopting the Act as is suggested a local authority would avoid that expense.

That, however, would really be a breach of public duty which certainly I am not at all prepared to attribute to any local authority in the country.

MR. McLAREN: I think the right hon. Gentleman ought to deal with the matter from a legal point of view. A distinct hiatus in the machinery of the Act has been pointed out, and instead of meeting it with "pooh-poohs" as a far-fetched idea and appealing to the general good sense of the community to prevent such things happening, the point should be properly dealt with. Everybody knows what takes place at elections of local authorities. Just before an election a local authority might pass a resolution adopting the Act, but fail to take further proceedings. The election might take place upon this particular issue, which would be a direct appeal to the pockets of the ratepayers, and a majority returned against going any further with the Act. By the passing of the resolution the local authority gets rid of the liability, and there is nothing in the Act to compel them to enter into the obligation referred to in the Amendment. I think the question ought to be met by the Government, and if it is not there should be a Division.

Question put, and agreed to.

SIR JAMES WOODHOUSE: (Huddersfield): The right hon. Gentleman has met my point by the Amendment just carried, and therefore I do not move the one standing in my name on the Paper.

Other Amendments made.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 6, line 19, after the word 'sum,' to insert the words, 'rateable value,' shall include the value of the Government property upon which a contribution in lieu of rates is paid."
—(Colonel Hughes.)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I hope very much my hon. friend will not insist upon the introduction of these words. I know what his object is, and similar words were introduced into the London Government Bill, where, however, they were of very much greater importance. The point is that the Bill provides that

where the expenses under the Act exceed $\frac{1}{2}$ d. in the £ on the rateable value the operation of the Bill must stop for a certain period. My hon. friend desires to include in the rateable value the value of Government property for this purpose. As I have stated over and over again, the Government do not think the provision will be operative, because they do not anticipate that there will be any expenditure which will exceed or approach $\frac{1}{2}$ d. in the £ on the rateable value, and therefore the inclusion or exclusion of Government property is of no great importance in regard to this Bill, although it was of great importance in the London Government Bill. I also understand that the Amendment if made would introduce considerable difficulties, and therefore I hope it will not be pressed on this occasion.

*COLONEL HUGHES (Woolwich): In the Borough of Woolwich about £91,000 is the annual value of Government property, on which a contribution is paid in lieu of rates. That £91,000 forms part of the total annual value of the district, and I think it ought to be included for the purposes of this clause. As it is in respect of Government workmen that we should want to build houses, the Government property ought really to be represented as much as ordinary property.

MR. SYDNEY GEDGE (Walsall): It is rather a dangerous way of dealing with a draft Bill in Parliament to assume that a clause is put in to meet a case which will never arise. The assumption is that there will be no expenditure, or, if there is, it will not amount to $\frac{1}{2}$ d. in the £. If that is so, what is the use of the clause at all? But you cannot take anticipations of that sort as likely to be correct. At the time of the passing of the Education Bill it was distinctly stated that the rate was not likely to exceed 3d. in the £, but we all know that the average rate is nearer 1s. than 3d. Therefore you cannot rely upon anticipations of that kind. The right hon. Gentleman said that difficulties would arise if these words were inserted, but he did not say what those difficulties were, and as the principle has been admitted in the London Government Bill, I think it should be admitted here.

*MR. M'KENNA: I am not surprised that the Colonial Secretary should poo-hoo this Amendment, because so far from anticipating a loss in the working of the Bill he anticipates a profit of 4s. per £100 invested.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I think the hon. Member is labouring under a mistake.

*MR. M'KENNA: The right hon. Gentleman stated so.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I have not said that at all.

*MR. M'KENNA: About this particular Bill no; but about the principle on which this Bill is based, and about the provisions which are contained in this measure, the right hon. Gentleman has certainly stated so.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I think the hon Member is mistaken, that is all.

*MR. M'KENNA: On the occasion to which I refer he anticipated a profit, but we who look differently upon the construction of this measure cannot fail to anticipate a loss. I should be anxious to cut down the possible losses to local authorities as much as possible, and therefore I should oppose the Amendment of the hon. Member for Woolwich, and hope he will not press it.

Question put and negatived.

Other Amendments made.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, M.): I quite approve of the principle of this measure in so far as it is a measure to enable the ownership of small houses to be acquired by their residents in certain localities, and I approve of it also because it is an attempt to introduce cheapness into the transfer of property. But while I approve of the measure, I have a very strong objection to its being made applicable in Scotland, as the Bill from its whole structure applies mainly to the case of England and can only be adapted to the case of Scotland by the substitution of a great many words. The legal authorities in Scotland have for a long time protested against this system of mixing up what is peculiarly Scotch legislation with English legislation, in

cases where the laws in both countries are essentially different. In this particular case there is no doubt that the law of England as regards heritable property is different from that of Scotland, and we ought to have legislation for Scotland in a separate Bill altogether, not tacked on to the end of a Bill applicable to England, but a Bill which would deal with the subject of Scotch land legislation in a manner which would be intelligible and not complicated.

Attention called to the fact that forty Members were not present; House counted, and forty Members being found present:—

MR. CALDWELL: As an illustration of the difference of the working of the Act in Scotland from the working of the Act in England, take the case of a man occupying one of these holdings who dies. Immediately two persons are introduced: one the widow and the other the heir. There is no provision, whatever, in this Bill for dealing with such an ordinary case as that, and it is a case which will confront the local authorities almost at the very start. Then, again, there are other peculiar points. In the case of England, for instance, the personal representative of the proprietor transfers the holding, but in Scotland the holding will necessarily be heritable property and would necessarily descend to the eldest son. Supposing the eldest son is not living with the family, would it not then be a very hard thing that the widow and the other members of the family should be turned out on account of the statutory condition that the proprietor must be resident on the property? Strictly speaking there would be a breach of the Statute, because in that case the widow would not be the proprietor of the holding. Then, again, in the case of leasehold property in Scotland the widow would have no rights whatever, and she would be practically an outsider so far as the property was concerned. I am only pointing out these cases to show the difficulty of dealing with the case of Scotland in a Bill which may be good enough and applicable enough to the case of England. There is also another important matter that has to be considered. The county councils are the local authorities in Scotland, and they are to exercise jurisdiction in this matter over the whole of their

areas, including boroughs which do not exceed 7,000 inhabitants. The valuation of these small boroughs is to be included in the valuation of the county, and then the rate is not to exceed $\frac{1}{2}$ d. in the £ over a whole area. But the Lord Advocate will notice that we have not yet ascertained whether the $\frac{1}{2}$ d. rate over the whole area may not necessarily mean a penny or a twopenny rate so far as these small boroughs are concerned, because under the structure of the Bill the town commissioners of each borough are to pay over to the county council on requisition an amount equal to the proportion which the valuation of the borough bears to the valuation of the whole area. The Bill is properly drafted so far as England is concerned. In England you are dealing with county council areas, county borough areas, urban district areas, and sanitary district areas, but there are no complications, because the local authorities are the local authorities of the whole area. But the matter is complicated when you come to deal with another area altogether, and when the local authority requisition for a certain amount of money for an area in which they have no jurisdiction otherwise. But there is another point which has to be borne in mind. Under Clause 9, Sub-section 7, power is taken that any money received or retained by the local authority shall be applied, with the sanction of the Local Government Board, either to the payment of debt or to any other purpose to which capital money may be applied. It means that the local authority might use the money collected as capital under this Act for a purpose outside this Act altogether, such as electric lighting. There is no great hardship when you are dealing with the local authority for the whole district, where the ratepayers are the same ratepayers which have advanced the money, and where the capital not used for this Act is at least going for some other purpose. There is no inconvenience therefore in the case of England, where the local authority represents the whole of the ratepayers in the locality. But observe what you are doing in the case of Scotland. The local authority is the county council, which is empowered to employ any portion of the money for purposes other than the purposes of this Act. The boroughs would get no part of this money, and they would be liable to be assessed and continue liable to be

assessed in respect of this Act, whilst at the same time the money might be diverted by the county council to purposes from which the boroughs would derive no benefit whatever. I mention these illustrations to show the great difficulty of attempting to make a Bill which may be in every respect suitable to England applicable to Scotland. Land legislation and questions of succession are utterly different in England and in Scotland, and I protest against this method of dealing with this important subject. Legal authorities in Scotland have always been complaining of this method and have always been insisting that legislation for Scotland should be in an entirely different Bill beginning from the foundation in accordance with the Scotch principle of land legislation. We have had an Agricultural Rating Bill for England and a separate Bill for Scotland, and a Voluntary Schools Bill for England and a separate measure for Scotland, and yet these subjects were twenty times less complicated than this. I really cannot understand why the Government should attempt to deal with such an important subject in this way. Everyone is anxious that the present Bill should succeed, and the only way to make it succeed is to have the machinery simple. If the machinery is complicated an immense number of questions will arise which will lead to litigation and mean absolute ruin to the small proprietors concerned. I have put down a number of Amendments to try as far as possible to adapt this Bill to Scotland. But anyone who studies it will feel convinced that it is a Bill that cannot be adapted in this way, and that it would have been much better if Scotland had had a separate Bill. I will, therefore, move in Clause 11, page 7, line 23, after "shall" to insert "not." It will follow consequently that all to the end of Clause 13 would be deleted. Whether the Amendment be accepted or not, I wish to make a protest at this stage against dealing with complicated questions of this kind in such a manner.

MR. GALLOWAY (Manchester, S.W.): On a point of order, would not this Amendment make absolute nonsense of the whole clause?

MR. SPEAKER: If the hon. Member carries this Amendment another Amend-

ment will follow, but he cannot move two Amendments at the same time.

MR. GALLOWAY: Would not the hon. Member be more in order in moving to omit the clause?

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is quite in order. If the clause were struck out, the Bill would apply to Scotland.

Amendment proposed—

“In page 7, line 23, after the word ‘shall’ to insert the word ‘not.’”—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Question proposed, “That the word ‘not’ be there inserted.”

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): The hon. Member for Mid-Lanark has somewhat surprised me by moving this Amendment, because the contention usually put forward is that in measures of general importance the two kingdoms should not be dealt with separately. It is quite true, of course, that there are certain matters which can be more appropriately dealt with in separate Bills. The hon. Member has given some instances, but I think he will find that the real criterion is that where the subject matter of a measure is a common-sense idea applicable to both countries there is no reason why we should not have one Bill, even though the actual machinery may be rather varied. The Agricultural Rating Bill is not a case in point, because in England the Bill relieved a part of the agricultural rates, and if the same words were to apply to Scotland they would have no practical result, because the rating system is essentially different. The object here is precisely the same in both countries, and it is only in the carrying out of the matter that

there is any difference. Now that we have had the hon. Gentleman's opinion upon it I do not think he will expect me to accept the Amendment. The hon. Member for South-West Manchester need not be at all nervous that the hon. Member for Mid-Lanark will persist in his Amendment, because if it were carried it would be perfectly suicidal, as it would prevent him from moving his other well-considered Amendments on the paper.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs): If my hon. friend goes to a Division I shall certainly support him. There is this peculiarity so far as Scotland is concerned. The Bill has never been discussed there. There is no public demand for it, and throughout the length and breadth of Scotland not a single candidate referred to the subject in his election address. Personally I do not believe there is any demand for this Bill in England. But so far as Scotland is concerned the Lord Advocate will agree with me that it is an absolutely new proposal, and foreign altogether to the whole idea of the occupation and ownership of houses in Scotland. It may be used at election times by our friends opposite, but there is no demand for it, and I doubt whether it will be used. I believe the proposal is one totally against the whole movement in Scotland in respect to land reform, and we had recent evidence of that so far as the Edinburgh elections were concerned. If the hon. Member goes to a Division, in order to repudiate all responsibility for foisting this Bill on Scotch Members, I certainly shall support him.

The House divided:—Ayes, 48; Noes, 130. (Division List No. 216.)

AYES.

Allan, William (Gateshead)
Billson, Alfred
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Burns, John
Cameron, Sir Charles (Glasgow)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Clark, Dr. G. B. (Caithness-sh.)
Clough, Walter Owen
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Curran, Thomas (Sligo, S.)
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Dunn, Sir William
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Goddard, Daniel Ford

Hazell, Walter
Holland, Wm. H. (York, W. R.)
Horniman, Frederick John
Leng, Sir John
MacAleese, Daniel
McLaren, Charles Benjamin
M'Leod, John
Mendl, Sigismund Ferdinand
Moss, Samuel
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pirie, Duncan V.
Priestley, Briggs (Yorks.)
Randell, David
Richardson, J. (Durham, S. E.)

Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, J. H. (Denbighs.)
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Shaw, Charles E. (Stafford)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Steadman, William Charles
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Thomas, D. A. (Merthyr)
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Wedderburn, Sir William
Weir, James Galloway
Williams, John Carvell (Notts.)
Yoxall, James Henry
TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Mr. Caldwell and Mr.
Dalziel.

NOES.

Allhusen, Augustus H. Eden
 Archdale, Edward Mervyn
 Arnold, Alfred
 Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
 Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
 Balcarres, Lord
 Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (Leeds)
 Barnes, Frederic Gorell
 Barry, Rt. Hn. A. H. Smith. (Hunts)
 Bartley, George C. T.
 Barton, Dunbar Plunket
 Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
 Begg, Ferdinand Faithfull
 Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
 Bhownaggee, Sir M. M.
 Blakiston-Houston, John
 Blundell, Colonel Henry
 Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
 Bowles, T. Gibson (King's Lynn)
 Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
 Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
 Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.)
 Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r)
 Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
 Charrington, Spencer
 Clare, Octavius Leigh
 Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
 Cohen, Benjamin Louis
 Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
 Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
 Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
 Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
 Cubitt, Hon. Henry
 Curzon, Viscount
 Dalkeith, Earl of
 Davies, Sir H. D. (Chatham)
 Denny, Colonel
 Dewar, Arthur
 Donkin, Richard Sim
 Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
 Doxford, William Theodore
 Drucker, A.
 Fardell, Sir T. George
 Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
 Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne

Fisher, William Hayes
 Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
 Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
 Galloway, William Johnson
 Garfit, William
 Gedge, Sydney
 Gibbs, Hn. Vicary (St. Albans)
 Giles, Charles Tyrrell
 Gilliat, John Saunders
 Goldsworthy, Major-General
 Gordon, Hon. John Edward
 Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
 Goulding, Edward Alfred
 Green, Walford D. (Wed'bur.)
 Hamilton, Rt. Hn. Lord Georgy
 Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm
 Haslett, Sir James Horner
 Heath, James
 Henderson, Alexander
 Hill, Arthur (Down, West)
 Hill, Sir Edward Stock (Bristol)
 Holland, Hon. Lionel R. (Bow)
 Hornby, Sir William Henry
 Howard, Joseph
 Howell, William Tudor
 Hutton, John (Yorks. N. R.)
 Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
 Johnston, William (Belfast)
 Jolliffe, Hon. H. George
 Kenyon, James
 Keswick, William
 Laurie, Lieut.-General
 Lawrence, Sir E. Durning. (Corn)
 Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
 Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
 Long, Rt. Hn. Wlfr. (Liverpool)
 Lowe, Francis William
 Loyd, Archie Kirkman
 Macartney, W. G. Ellison
 Macdonald, John Cumming
 Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
 Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
 Milton, Viscount
 Milward, Colonel Victor
 Moore, William (Antrim, N.)

Morton, A. H. A. (Deptford)
 Murray, Rt. Hn. A. Gr'h'm (Bute)
 Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
 Newdigate, Francis Alexander
 Nicholson, William Graham
 Nicol, Donald Ninian
 Parkes, Ebenezer
 Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
 Pierpoint, Robert
 Pilkington, R. (Lancs. Newton)
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Pollock, Harry Frederick
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edw.
 Purvis, Robert
 Pym, C. Guy
 Richards, Henry Charles
 Ridley, Rt. Hn. Sir Matthew W.
 Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chs. Thomson
 Royds, Clement Molyneux
 Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
 Seton-Karr, Henry
 Sidebottom, Wm. (Derbysh.)
 Skewes-Cox, Thomas
 Stanley, Henry M. (Lambeth)
 Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
 Stock, James Henry
 Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
 Valentia, Viscount
 Wallace, Robert
 Wanklyn, James Leslie
 Wharton, Rt. Hon. J. Lloyd
 Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
 Williams, Joseph Powell (Birm.)
 Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
 Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
 Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
 Wyndham, George
 Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
 Young, Commander (Berks, E.)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
 Sir William Walrond and
 Mr. Anstruther.

Other Amendments agreed to.

MR. WILLIAM MOORE (Antrim, N.): The object of the Amendment which stands in my name is to extend the number of towns and urban district councils in Ireland in which the Act may be put into operation. I may remind the House that the Bill already recognises the principle that you may have in Ireland a different qualification as to population from what you may have in England. In England the qualifying population is 7,000; in Ireland, both as to rural and urban districts, it is 5,000. Now, I submit to the House that in drawing the line in the case of the urban districts, especially at 5,000, it has been drawn too high. We are very anxious in the North of Ireland to have the benefits of the Act extended. I think I can satisfy the

Government that if my Amendment is accepted it will confer a great benefit on a large number of municipalities. There are in Ireland 95 municipalities, and under the Bill as it originally stood with a qualifying population of 10,000 only 13 towns would have been qualified to put the Act into operation. In Committee the qualifying limit was brought down to 5,000 for Ireland, which brought in 26 municipalities. My Amendment proposes a population limit of 3,000, which would allow other 33 towns to bring the Act into operation, making a total of 59 towns out of the whole 95 municipalities in Ireland. If this Act is to be such a benefit to England and Scotland as has been represented, it is at least reasonable to ask that 59 towns in Ireland should have the same privilege. These towns have all very large powers of borrowing under the

Public Health Act and the Towns Improvement Act. The Solicitor-General says that the valuation of these towns with a population of 3,000 is very small, and that in the event of a total loss the rates would be increased very much. I would state that the local boards are allowed to take collateral security, and they have also the veto of the Irish Local Government Board to fall back on. You could hardly imagine, therefore, that under this Act there could be a total loss. No money can be borrowed until the boards are satisfied that the security is ample, and until it has been approved of by the Local Government Board in Ireland. I may point out as evidence that the population line has been wrongly drawn, that the valuation of some of the towns which are allowed to come in on the 5,000 population basis is considerably below the valuation of some of the towns with only 3,000 inhabitants. For instance, Carrick-on-Suir has a population of 5,608 with a valuation of £6,800, while Crookstown with a population of 3,000 has a valuation of over £11,000. Many other instances could be given. I regret to be obliged to bring this matter to a Division, but I have received resolutions from county councils and from towns in the North of Ireland which are very alive to the benefits of the Bill, and which have not the advantage of building societies enjoyed by towns of the same extent in England, that they are anxious that this Act should be worked in their district so far as it can be worked.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 10, line 29, after the words 'seven thousand,' to insert the words 'in so far as the same relates to the council of any rural district, and in the case of the council of any urban district three thousand.'" — (*Mr. William Moore.*)

Question proposed—"That those words be there inserted."

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (*Mr. ATKINSON, Londonderry, N.*): I regret that I cannot accept the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman. The Amendment introduced into Committee by the right hon. the Colonial Secretary afforded an opportunity to a considerable part of the rural districts in Ireland to come under the operations of the Act. We must remember that towns with 3,000 population really do not contain the class of people whom this Act is designed

to benefit. In addition to that the valuation of at least fifty towns in Ireland is only from £1 to £1 10s. per head of the population. For instance, in Castlebar there is a population of 3,558, and the valuation is £4,352. In Cashel the population is 3,216, and the valuation is £3,642; in Trim the population is 3,612, and the valuation £3,816; in Navan the population is 3,269, and the valuation £5,355; in Clonakilty the population is 3,221, and the valuation £4,592. What does that mean? If you take the population at 3,000, and the valuation at £4,000, you can only raise 4,000 pennies. Four thousand pennies makes £16 13s. 4d. Imagine any local authority starting to put this Act into operation, making an advance of £240 for the purchase of a house with only a guarantee of £16 per annum. Sir, this proposal makes the Bill perfectly ridiculous.

MR. WOLFF (*Belfast, E.*): It seems to me very evident that if this Act is to do any good at all it is more likely to do it in small towns than in large ones. I have had considerable experience of workmen in large towns, the result of which goes to show that in those places they frequently shift from one part of a town to another, and also from one town to another; but in a small town the average workman frequently remains for half his working life. If, therefore, this Bill is to be of any use—and I do not think it will be of much use—it ought to apply to the small towns as much as possible. The Attorney-General has told us that the valuation in many of these towns is so small that the Act could not be put into effect except in regard to very few houses. There had better be few houses bought than none at all. I think it is a great pity that the Attorney-General should take the course he proposes, and I hope he will change his mind. If the hon. Member who moved this Amendment will go to a Division I shall certainly support him, however much I may regret the necessity of voting against the Government.

MR. HEMPHILL (*Tyrone, N.*): In this case I am happy to be able to support the Amendment of my hon. and learned friend the Member for North Antrim, and also the hon. Gentleman who last spoke. In the Standing Committee on Law I advocated the

reduction of the test by which this Act would be applied to small towns in Ireland. I think everybody who knows Ireland must be aware that the towns are very small throughout the length and breadth of the country. Assuming, for the purpose of the very few observations that I intend to make, that this is a beneficial Act, we have it from the statistics of the hon. and learned Member for North Antrim that to draw the line at 5,000 inhabitants would exclude thirty-three towns in Ireland from benefiting by the Bill. Why should they be excluded? I cannot imagine why the opposition to this Amendment should be persisted in. There may be a few towns in Ireland in which it would be a decided advantage for the poor working man to have the benefit of this Act. It is very likely that the Act may be a dead letter in Ireland—I do not myself look forward to any great results from it—but in legislation we are bound to assume that some beneficial results will follow. In applying the old-fashioned rule of three to the Bill it is obvious to every Member in this House that the ratio of 3,000 inhabitants in Ireland would be fully represented by 7,000 in England, while 5,000 in Ireland would be equivalent to 10,000 or 15,000 in England. On the whole, therefore, I trust my right hon. friend will accept this Amendment.

MR. GALLOWAY (Manchester, S.W.): This is an Amendment which has for its object the granting of facilities for the acquisition of houses by working men. We had a discussion at an earlier stage with regard to the limit of population in England, and I voted then for the smaller number—I think the reduction was from 7,000 to 5,000—as I did in the Grand Committee on Law, because, however small may be the number of cases in which the Act can be applied, if it is going to be of any benefit at all there is no reason why these places should be excluded. It appears to me that if the Act is beneficial in any respect, we ought, wherever we can, consistently with safety, to secure the application of the Act. It surely is rather extraordinary that the right hon. Gentleman the Attorney-General for Ireland should object to this Amendment, because as the hon. and learned Gentleman who moved it said, the Act as it at present stands would only apply to twenty-six towns. It does seem

to me that twenty-six towns out of ninety-five is a very small proportion indeed; in fact, it is little more than a quarter, and I do not think that in legislating for Ireland the Unionist party, at any rate, should exclude three-fourths of the towns from the benefit of the Act. I do not see in the arguments used by the Attorney-General for Ireland any reason why the Amendment should not be accepted, and I shall certainly support my hon. friend.

MR. McLAREN: It is abundantly clear from the speeches made by the hon. Members below the gangway on the other side that unless the Amendment is carried the Bill will have practically no operation in Ireland. We know the form in which the Bill was cast would prevent it from having any valid operation in this country, but some of us did, at all events, hope that it would apply to the sister country, and be one of the great remedial measures which the Government pride themselves on introducing to heal the wounds of the sister country. But the hon. Member for East Belfast, whose experience as an employer of labour is second to none, perhaps, in this country, assures us that the better class of workmen—that is to say, the workmen enjoying the opportunity of earning large wages in the great centres of industry—will not avail themselves of the powers given by the Bill. Therefore it only remains to be seen how far the Bill can be applied in the smaller towns where the poorer classes are accustomed to live for generations. The hon. Member for North Antrim has put his finger on the blot in the Bill. He shows that unless the limit of population is decreased practically no Irish towns except the few larger ones will be benefited under the Bill at all, and we all know that unless the people of these smaller places have a personal interest in carrying out the provisions of a scheme of this kind it has very little prospect of being put into force. Those who heard the speech of the Attorney-General for Ireland must feel that his objection to the Amendment was a purely technical one, and therefore the hon. Member, in moving as he does from the Government side of the House, will have a better chance of getting the Government to accept his Amendment than if it were moved from this side.

COLONEL MILWARD (Warwick, Stratford-on-Avon): We discussed this question when the question of England was being considered, and I thought then it was the unanimous opinion of that House that to reduce the limit of population too low was to really introduce a dangerous principle into the Bill. Hon. Members who have spoken have said that they can see no harm or danger in introducing this limit. I think there is a very great danger indeed. When you come to towns of 3,000 population, and you propose to allow the urban council to advance very considerable sums of money, you run at once into a very great danger. One danger not mentioned in the House tonight is that, although you are limited to a loss of 1d. in the £ as far as the rates are concerned, yet the loss may be much heavier than that before it is found out. You may have built right and left before you actually find that you have a loss, and you may be committed to a very large loss indeed. I think the hon. Members who have spoken have quite forgotten that all these towns are taken over by the county councils; they are not excluded under the Bill; but instead of applying to their own urban councils, they look to the county councils which have recently been established. Under these circumstances I hope the Government will adhere to the limit that they have decided upon.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I have already discussed this question at considerable length, when the Amendments were under discussion on the English part of the Bill, and I very strongly expressed my opinion that the proper authority to put into force this Bill, so far as it is good for anything, were the small district councils, who would know the character of the borrowers from personal knowledge. It has been said in this Debate, as was said when the main clause was under discussion, that these districts, which are deprived, or ought to be deprived, of autonomy under this Bill, would be taken care of by the county councils. When that proposition was advanced on a previous occasion, I asked the Colonial Secretary, in charge of the Bill, what was to be the area charged—because that is an all important question—and the Colonial Secretary replied that that would be dealt with in a different Amendment. I have only had time to make a

hurried examination of the Amendment, but as far as I can gather the area charged in the case of these small councils is the county. If that is the case the Bill will not be put into operation as far as the small towns are concerned. To tell me that the county councils will advance money to these small towns and run the risk of putting a rate on the whole county is to talk nonsense. They will do nothing of the sort, and these unfortunate districts will be completely cut off from all benefit under this Bill if this is to be the area charged. If you allow the small towns to advance the money they will only advance it to three or four occupiers in the first instance, and if they find the experiment successful they will advance money to others. I submit that no argument has been advanced against the Amendment. When the hon. Member for Stratford-on-Avon said he thought it was a dangerous Amendment, he was probably ignorant of the difference which exists between Ireland and England as regards the standard of urban population. I have no hesitation in saying that a population of 2,000 in a town in Ireland is equal to a population of 10,000 in a town in England. When, therefore, the House is asked to reduce the limit of population in Ireland to 3,000, as compared with 7,000 in England, I think it is a very moderate request. I trust the hon. Member for North Antrim will go to a Division.

MR. ATKINSON: The loan is only repayable in thirty-three years, and most of the small towns in Ireland, after they have advanced £140 at 2½ per cent. to three individuals, will have their hands tied up.

SIR JAMES HASLETT (Belfast, N.): I am not aware of a single town in Ireland where the ordinary artisan could spend £300 for his dwelling. The average cost of an artisan's house in a rural district would be from £80 to £100. The average cost of an artisan's house in the City of Belfast would be from £120 to £140. It is, therefore, quite a fallacy to say that the artisan would spend the sum suggested. Such a thing is not known. It is in the small towns in Ireland that the Bill is mostly needed, and I would earnestly ask the Attorney-General to accept the reduced limit of 3,000 population in Ireland, since it is a fair

comparison with 7,000 population in | The House divided:—Ayes, 84; Noes, 148. (Division List No. 217.)

AYES.

Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, Wm. (Newc. under Lyme)
Archdale, Edward Mervyn
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Billson, Alfred
Blakiston-Houston, John
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Bowles, T. G. (King's Lynn)
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Burns, John
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Sir C. (Glasgow)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Clark, Dr. G. B. (Caithness-sh.)
Clough, Walter Owen
Colville, John
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Curran, Thomas (Sligo, S.)
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan (Cardigan)
Davitt, Michael
Dewar, Arthur
Dillon, John
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.

Dunn, Sir William
Evans, S. T. (Glamorgan)
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir W. (Derby Co.)
Galloway, W. Johnson
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gurdon, Sir William Brampton
Harwood, George
Haselett, Sir J. Horner
Hazell, Walter
Hedderwick, Thomas Chas. H.
Holland, Wm. H. (York, W. R.)
Horniman, Frederick John
Kearley, Hudson E.
Langley, Batty
Leng, Sir John
Lewis, John Herbert
Logan, John William
Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
Lough, Thomas
Macaleese, Daniel
McDermott, Patrick
M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
M'Leod, John
Mend, Sigismund Ferdinand
Moss, Samuel
Norton, Capt. Cecil William

O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
Oldroyd, Mark
Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
Pilkington, Sir G. A. (Lancs. SW)
Pirie, Duncan V.
Priestley, Briggs (Yorks)
Randell, David
Richardson, J. (Durham, S. E.)
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Roberts, John H. (Denbghsh.)
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Souttar, Robinson
Steadman, William Charles
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Thomas, Alf. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David Alf. (Merthyr)
Trevelyan, Charles Philipe
Wedderburn, Sir William
Weir, James Galloway
Williams, John Carvell (Notts.)
Wilson, John (Govan)
Young, Samuel (Cavan, East)
Yoxall, James Henry
TELLERS FOR THE AYES,
Mr. William Moore and
Mr. Wolff.

NOES.

Allhusen, Augustus Henry E.
Arnold, Alfred
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Baird, John George A.
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. Gerald W. (Leeds)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barnes, Frederic Gorell
Barry, Rt. Hon. A. H. Smith (Hunts)
Bartley, George C. T.
Barton, Dunbar Plunket
Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Begg, Ferdinand Faithfull
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggee, Sir M. M.
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm)
Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Cochrane, Hon. T. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colston, Chas. Ed. H. Athole
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cox, Irwin E. Bainbridge
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)

Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Curzon, Viscount
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davies, Sir Horatio D. (Chatham)
Denny, Colonel
Donkin, Richard Sim
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, William Theodore
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellows, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
FitzGerald, Sir Robert Penrose
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
Garfit, William
Gedge, Sydney
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (Salisbury)
Giles, Charles Tyrrell
Gilliat, John Saunders
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, Hon. John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Rt. Hon. G. J. (St. George's)
Green, Walford D. (Wendesbury)
Gretton, John
Gull, Sir Cameron
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord George
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hardy, Laurence
Heath, James
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Alexander
Hoare, Samuel (Norwich)

Hornby, Sir William Henry
Howell, William Tudor
Hutton, John (Yorks. N. R.)
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
Jolliffe, Hon. H. George
Kenyon, James
Keswick, William
Lawrence, Sir E. Durning (Corn)
Lockwood, Lt.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hon. Walter (Liverpool)
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
Macdona, John Cumming
Maclure, Sir John William
M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
Maxwell, Rt. Hon. Sir Herbert E.
Mellor, Col. (Lancashire)
Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
Milton, Viscount
Milward, Colonel Victor
Morgan, Hn. Fred. (Monm'thsh.)
Morton, A. H. A. (Deptford)
Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G. (Bute)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)
Myers, William Henry
Newdigate, Francis Alexander
Nicholson, William Graham
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Parkes, Ebenezer
Phillipotts, Captain Arthur
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, R. (Lancs. Newton)

Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Pollock, Harry Frederick
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
 Purvis Robert
 Syme, C. Guy
 Richards, Henry Charles
 Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir Matthew W.
 Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
 Royds, Clement Molyneux
 Russell, Gen. F.S. (Cheltenham
 Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
 Ryder, John Herbert Dudley
 Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
 Seely, Charles Hilton

Seton-Karr, Henry
 Sidebottom, William (Derbysh.)
 Skewes-Cox, Thomas
 Smith, James P. (Lanarks.)
 Stanley, Henry M. (Lambeth)
 Stanley, Lora (Lanark)
 Stewart, Sir Mark J. M. Taggart
 Stock, James Henry
 Strauss, Arthur
 Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
 Tollemache, Henry James
 Tomlinson, W. Edw. Murray
 Valentia, Viscount
 Wanklyn, James Leslie
 Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd

Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
 Williams, Joseph Powell (Birm)
 Willox, Sir John Archibald
 Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
 Wodehouse, Rt. Hon. E. R. (Bath)
 Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
 Wyndham, George
 Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
 Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy
 Young, Commander (Berks, E.)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
 Sir William Walrond and
 Mr. Anstruther.

Other Amendments made.

Motion made, and Question proposed—

“That the Bill be re-committed in respect of Clause 12.”—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

MR. SYDNEY GEDGE (who spoke amid repeated cries of “Divide,” was understood to say): I beg to move as an Amendment that the Bill be re-committed in respect of Clauses 8 and 12. I wish Clause 8 also to be considered with a view to its omission, and the insertion of another clause which was to be moved by the Colonial Secretary. The right hon. Gentleman moved, but afterwards withdrew it. My reason for moving the Amendment is that the clause as it now stands introduces, as regards all purchases and sales under the Bill, the Land Transfer Act of 1897 in every county in England. This is contrary to the distinct promise which was made when that Act was passed that it should be tried as an experiment only in the administrative County of London, and that for three years it should not be introduced in any other county in England, nor afterwards unless the county council asked that the Act should be put into force. This Bill suggests no machinery of any kind for the purpose of putting it into force. Not only is there no machinery, but when a deputation of the Incorporated Law Society waited on the Attorney-General, he promised to reconsider the matter. There is now some idea of leaving it to the House of Lords, and we know what the result will be.

Amendment proposed—

“After the word ‘Clause,’ to insert the words ‘eight and Clause.’”—(*Mr. Sydney Gedge.*)

Question proposed, “That those words be there inserted.”

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: When the Bill was before the House on the Report stage I moved to omit Clause 8 and to insert an alternative clause, on the ground that it was in conflict with an understanding given during the passage of the Land Transfer Act through the House. Objection was taken to my proposal from many quarters of the House, and I was asked to reconsider the matter, as the suggested alteration was no improvement to the Bill. As the Attorney-General is absent on important public business, I have not had an opportunity of consulting him, but the Government is bound to carry out any pledge given on its behalf. I promised that the whole matter should receive consideration when the Bill came before the other House. My hon. friend now wants to hurry matters, and to have the point dealt with before full consideration has been given to it. I think, and I should like to know from the hon. Member whether he thinks, that any pledge given would be sufficiently met if in another place it was provided that Clause 8 should not come into operation until the expiry of the three years during which no extension of the Land Transfer Act should take place. That is a compromise which I would consider, and I shall ask my hon. friend to say before the Bill comes before the House of Lords whether that compromise would meet the views of those whom he represents. I should then require further time to consider the whole case.

*MR. HELDER (Whitehaven): As one of the deputation which waited on the Attorney-General, I would like to say he dealt with the matter in such a way as led us to suppose that the clause would be withdrawn, or that some alteration would be made when the Bill again came before

the House, in order to meet the views of the Incorporated Law Society. There are faults in Clause 8 which we consider very serious, but I think, on the whole, the right hon. Gentleman, the Colonial Secretary, has treated the matter very fairly, and that his suggestion to insert an agreed clause in another place is the best arrangement that could be made.

Question put and negatived.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill re-committed in respect of Clause 12.

Bill considered in Committee, and reported, with an Amendment; as amended, considered; to be read the third time To-morrow.

MILITARY WORKS BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): Since we passed the Resolution in Committee, authorising the introduction of this Bill, two memoranda have been issued. Since these Military and Naval Loans Bills were first resorted to the process has gone on, growing more rapidly from year to year. At first several years were allowed to elapse between the passing of one such Bill and the bringing in of another, but now this present measure is introduced after an interval of only two years. We are called upon to provide a further sum of £4,000,000, making within three years a sum of £9,450,000 for military works. Nor is that all. We are informed that this sum of £4,000,000 is not sufficient to carry out the complete scheme of the War Office. There is no such thing as a complete scheme in either the War Office or the Admiralty. The more money they get the more they are sure to require within a very short period. In this Schedule "A," which gives the particulars of the expenditure of the £4,000,000 now asked for, we are told that the complete scheme is estimated to cost £6,900,000. We have had some experience of these Estimates of the War Office, and we know that to round off this complete scheme many more millions will be required. I contend we have entered upon an extremely vicious

course of finance in departing from the good sound principle of voting year by year the money required by these services, and confounding the finances of the country by introducing these Loans Bills, which have the result of enormously increasing the expenditure. The Under Secretary for War made a remarkable statement in his speech when he said that the method of proceeding by loan was proposed by the War Office because they found that when they called upon the House for money for military works, criticism in Committee of Supply cut down their estimates enormously, and they consequently did not get all the money they required. What was the Committee of Supply set up for, but for the purpose of criticising and cutting down Estimates?

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): The hon. Gentleman is under a misunderstanding. The "cutting down" occurred long before the Estimates came before the House.

MR. DILLON: It took place from a wholesome fear of the criticism of the Committee of Supply, and that is my point. The system of introducing Loans Bills was then fallen back upon, because it was found that enormously larger sums of money could by that means be got through the House. That is a strong argument against these Loans Bills, because the whole system of the Committee of Supply has been devised for the purpose of checking the inevitable tendency of all the great spending Departments of the State to swell their Estimates. Human nature is so constituted that if there was not that check the Departments would swell and expand their Estimates until the back of the taxpayer was completely broken by the burden. Under the favouring circumstances of a wave of Imperial expansion which has passed over the country, the War Office and the Admiralty have set up for themselves a wholly peculiar position with reference to the taxpayer of this country. Why should they have the right to depart from the principles which control the civil departments of the State? Why should not the civil departments have a right to come with a Loans Bill and get £5,000,000 or £6,000,000 set apart for them, and spread over two or three

years? Under the first head of the items of expenditure is a sum of a round £1,000,000 for defence works. That looks rather suspicious. We are told that all these sums are based upon the most careful and elaborate estimates. It is rather a large demand upon our credulity to tell us that the War Office having carefully surveyed the military necessities of this vast Empire arrived at the conclusion that the sum actually required was £1,000,000—not a penny more nor sixpence less. We are not informed where the £1,000,000 is to be spent, nor have we the slightest indication of the purposes for which it is to be used. Many of the leading experts in the House tell us that this money is an absolute waste—just as much thrown away as were the enormous sums that were spent by Lord Palmerston on the defence of Portsmouth and other southern ports. I never pretended to be an expert about the War Office, but some time ago I read columns of letters in *The Times* from the hon. Member for West Belfast, who poses as a great authority on these matters, and in those letters we were distinctly told that the War Office is a “perfect monument of blundering stupidity.” And yet that is the body to which we are asked to entrust a million of money without an atom of information as to how it is to be spent. I am inclined to pin my faith to the hon. Member for York, who said that this money was going to be absolutely wasted, and that the proper use would be to station at those ports which are to be defended by military works a cruiser which could defend the port and in case of necessity be useful to sally forth and attack the enemy. I daresay that is a proper view and entitled to consideration. To the next item I have not the slightest opposition—£1,600 for building an enormous barracks at Salisbury Plain to make decent provision for our soldiers. But there are other items in this list to which I take the strongest possible objection. One is for the provision of barracks at Bermuda, Jamaica, and Halifax. I do not see what object there is in erecting fresh barracks and fortifications in these West India Islands. I firmly believe that in a very short time all the West India Islands will go over to the United States. That will be the inevitable result of the war between Spain and the United States, and the passing of Cuba into the system of the United States.

Mr. Dillon.

You are in vain endeavouring to prop up these colonies by a system of loans. They are bankrupt, but under the United States they will prosper; and when Jamaica and the other islands find that nature has intended that they should be part and parcel of the United States, they will state so, and the people of this country will not be foolish enough to resist their wishes; and if they are foolish enough they will find that this condition of things will arise—that these islands will require you to spill out your money in order to keep them loyal, and that you will end by getting so tired of the process that you will give them over to the United States. There is another reason why I think the people of this country are foolish in pursuing this policy. You are always talking of the Anglo-Saxon race, and a large section of the people of this country are nursing themselves in the delusion that you can succeed in cultivating an alliance with the United States. That is a condition of things that I think is exceedingly unlikely to come off. But supposing it were, do you think you are promoting that state of good feeling by the provision of these fortifications and troops in the West India Islands? Against whom are you providing? Who is likely to touch these West India Islands? What European Power is likely to have the means of attacking them? The thing is absurd. There can be only one power against which you are fortifying these islands, and that is the United States of America. Therefore, from your own point of view, this is a foolish waste of money. As to the item of £130,000 for the erection of barracks at Wei-hai-wei, every possible opportunity ought to be taken to protest against the system, which has advanced by giant strides within the last two years, of getting in the pay of this country regiments and armies—as they are growing to be now—of strange and foreign and unchristian nations. It is an abominable system, and the further it extends the greater will become the monstrous evils to which it will lead. We heard for the first time last year of the African regiment and the Soudanese regiment, whose conduct in war it is impossible to foresee. They will undoubtedly commit atrocities which ought to bring shame to the people of this country. But now, forsooth, not content with having had black regiments

and Egyptian regiments and regiments of various other nationalities, we are now to have a yellow army. Human life and suffering are as nothing to them, and they commit the most appalling atrocities without any sense that they are committing atrocities at all. I protest against this Vote upon the grounds which I have stated, and I hope it will not be agreed to.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) : I confess that I share the dislike of the hon. Gentleman opposite to the system of getting money by Loans Bills instead of putting the expenditure on the Estimates in the usual way, and subjecting it to Parliamentary criticism. The criticism to which it would then be subject is quite different from that to which it is subject when it comes before us in a Loan Bill for a lump sum. In the Estimates each item is brought forward in detail, but when once a Loans Bill has passed there is an end to Parliamentary control over the expenditure. The sum involved here is really very large. The sum of the Bill is £4,000,000, but we are told that that is not the whole of the scheme of the War Office, but that £3,000,000 more will be wanted. In addition to that there is 5½ millions of the 1897 Loans Bill, so that we have a total of over £12,000,000. We can quite understand why the proposal is put into this shape. If it was put in the usual way, Parliament might be unduly curious and unduly troublesome about granting the money. Take the very last item—"Staff and contingencies, £190,000." I thought the staff was provided for in the Estimates. Is this an additional staff? If it is, this is not the right place to charge for it; but it should be on the Estimates. The salaries should be included in the Estimates, and laid before the House, so that the House could have an opportunity of criticising not merely the total amount, but the individual salaries, and, if need be, the power of moving the omission of any individual salary or individual member of the staff. Perhaps we shall have some explanation of that. There are two items I wish to call special attention to. First of all, let me remark as to the West Indian barracks. I think it is highly proper that they should be rebuilt and improved according to modern requirements, and the suggestion of the hon. Gentleman opposite, that the only country against

which we should have to defend the West India Islands is the United States, is entirely unfounded. We have had to defend them many times before, but never against the United States, and if we had to defend them again it would not be against the United States. As regards Wei-hai-wei, this £130,000 represents a very much larger necessary expenditure than appears on the face of it. This is simply the housing of troops which will cost you perhaps millions, and it represents, in my opinion, a very dangerous departure in English policy—a departure which involves a want of confidence in the Navy to do its business, and a tendency to rely rather upon the War Office than upon the Admiralty for the defence of British possessions, not only here but abroad. If you are going to put down permanently such a large number of soldiers as will cost you £130,000 to house, and that only as a beginning, such a step must give pause to anybody who has the interests of the Empire at heart. I hope my noble friend behind me will explain to the House what is the meaning of the permanent presence in Wei-hai-wei of such a body of troops as will require an expenditure of £130,000 to house them? If, as the hon. Gentleman opposite has suggested, the larger part of those troops are to be Chinese troops, then this £130,000 represents a much larger number of troops than would be the case if they were European troops, because the housing of Chinese troops is much cheaper than any other. Now I come to what I consider is the great blot in the Bill, and that is the first item of £1,000,000 for defence works. The hon. Gentleman opposite is not quite accurate when he says the War Office places this at the exact amount, for it proposes £306,000 more. The proposal of the War Office is for £1,306,000, of which this £1,000,000 is but an instalment. This is for defence works, but what defence works? You have got provision for rifle ranges, staff contingencies, and barracks, and here you ask for this large sum of money without any explanation at all, without any detail, and without any suggestion of the kind of work you are going to provide, and you do not even mention the places where the work is to be carried out, or the character of those places. You simply ask permission for the Government to

expend £1,306,000 on defence works. Now what are these defence works to be? It has been suggested by my hon. friend the Under Secretary of State for War—and it is the only suggestion we have had on the subject—that first of all it would be imprudent to state to the House the exact places where the defence works are to be erected, or their exact nature, because it would give information to the enemy and would be injurious to us. Now I absolutely disbelieve in all this secrecy. You do not hesitate to show foreigners every secret in our dockyards, but when you show a man a thing, unless you show him how to make it, and when it is made how to use it, you have not shown him much. It is extremely foolish to affect this secrecy in respect of defence works, because as soon as you begin to lay your first brick it will be in all the evening newspapers, and all foreign nations will know exactly what you are going to do. It seems to me that, before the Government ask us to allow them to spend this million of money, they ought to give the House some general scheme as to what they are going to do with it, and they ought to give us something like the same details as they have given with regard to the barracks. There are forty or fifty lines of details in regard to the proposed barracks, which are relatively unimportant, but there is not a line of information about the details of this enormous item for defence works. If it be true that a large portion of this money is being spent in setting up forts for the defence of commercial harbours, then I say that is distinctly an item which the House ought not to sanction. I ventured to demonstrate to the House the other day that a raid upon a commercial port by an enemy was practically impossible, and, if possible, would practically do no harm at all. If that be so, how much better it would be to spend this million on another ironclad. The House will observe that it is not the Admiralty which is in a fright, but the War Office. I should like to know whether the First Lord of the Admiralty was ever consulted about these defence works? My right hon. friend thinks that is a business which does not belong to the Admiralty, but belongs to the War Office. [Mr. GOSCHEN: "No."] Then I misinterpreted his smile, and I do not know what he smiled at. It does seem to me that the first person you should ask about these defence works is

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the First Lord of the Admiralty, because it is his primary business to afford us protection by ships and not by bricks and mortar. I do very seriously deprecate this new departure of attempting to defend your maritime ports no longer by ships but by earthworks and garrisons manned by the Army, for it marks a departure from the traditional policy of this country, which is to defend ourselves on the sea. That is where we must fight our battles, and not at any English commercial or naval port. It is at sea where all those great battles have been fought which have decided the safety of the British Empire, and it is at sea where they will have to be fought again. It is absurd, when you claim to have naval supremacy, to go pottering about building earthworks and setting up forts with little tin soldiers to man them in order to defend your commercial ports. If your Navy is not strong enough to defend these ports none of these earthworks will be of any use whatever. But if you are going to use money in this way, then you should justify your action by giving us the names of the places where you are going to spend the money, and give us some idea of the nature of the fortifications which you are going to erect, and let us know whether this money is to be spent upon guns or torpedoes. At any rate, I cannot conceive with what sort of face a Government can come down on the House of Commons, and, without giving any details whatever, ask us straight off for a million of money to spend in what they call defence works. This, to my mind, is the great blot in the Bill, and I do trust that before this discussion ends the right hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for War will really afford the House some information with regard to these naval defence works. I am no enemy to expenditure for naval and military defences, but I would rather see an increase in naval and a decrease in military expenditure, and I am afraid that the nature of this proposal is the other way, and that when the War Office gets this £12,500,000 the argument will go against an increase in the Navy. I very much regret that this Bill was introduced this evening at this late hour, because I am afraid the Debate will suffer, and I am still more sorry that no further information is forthcoming in regard to these defence works.

***LORD CHARLES BERESFORD** (York): The hon. Member for East Mayo appears to have misunderstood what I said the other night. I did not say that the £1,000,000 put down for defence works was unwise, but what I complained of was that a sum of £130,000 was going to be spent on Wei-hai-wei, and that the Government had absolutely changed their policy there as far as I could understand it. ("No, no.") The right hon. Gentleman on the Front Bench says "No," but he has his opinion and I have mine. When the question of the occupation of Wei-hai-wei was first brought before this House I expressed the view that I thought it was a very valuable secondary naval base, and it would have been valuable if we had adhered to the original policy of the Government at the time, which was the maintenance of the integrity of China. But since then the Government have changed their policy, although right hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench may deny it, for we have now drifted into the policy of spheres of influence, and that being so I think the possession of Wei-hai-wei will certainly be a great danger to us, because it will not be near our own sphere of influence. As far as the rest of the million of money goes, I think it is a very good expenditure. There are two questions to remember in fortifying places on shore. It is absolutely necessary that your naval arsenals should be adequately fortified and defended so as to allow your fleet to get out into the blue waters to tackle the enemy. In regard to the question of fortifying our commercial ports, I think it is the duty of the fleet to keep the enemy away from your commercial ports, and if we once agree in this House to fortify our commercial ports we shall have a very great power against us, because you will at once create a political power against you. You will not then be able to fortify one commercial port without being consistent and fortifying a great many other commercial ports, and no doubt pressure will be brought to bear on the Government to fortify other ports; and hon. Members of this House, in the interests of their constituents, will say to other hon. Members, "If you will support me in getting my port fortified I will support you to get your port fortified." If you spend a million of money in fortifying commercial ports—where an enemy ought never to come at all if the

fleet is properly managed—you will be taking that amount of money from your mobile defences by which the fleet ought to be supported. With regard to Wei-hai-wei, if we are going in for this spheres of influence policy into which we are drifting, we shall have to take over the Yang-tze province, for it is absolutely absurd to think that we can govern this province from Peking with the Peking Government, for when you do away with the constituted authority you will have to set up something in its place, and to do this you will have to occupy that province with a large number of men. That is the reason why I object to the expenditure of this sum of money for Wei-hai-wei, and I shall vote against it whenever it comes before the House. My position at the present moment is rather difficult, because I do not want to vote against the whole Bill, but I do want to vote against this item for Wei-hai-wei, which is put into the Bill. As to the rest of the Bill, the larger proportion is devoted to reforms and improvements which are absolutely necessary. I think the condition of the barracks in this country is simply a scandal to both this and the preceding Government. In the past our soldiers were not properly housed, and they have been put into very insanitary places, and I am very glad that the Government have decided to overhaul this matter, and are going to put these barracks into a state of proper repair, where the men can live decently. The hon. Member for East Mayo spoke of the objection which had been taken to our engaging armies of different colours; but I do not see why he objects to that, for our Empire is so enormous that even if we had conscription we could not properly police it if we had disturbances in our own territories, or if we had some disagreement with foreign nations. Therefore, we must have these coloured armies. My proposal to China was to have a Chinese Army, with a British officer at the head of it, on exactly the same lines that the Maritime Customs now are; that is to say, there should be a British officer at the head, but non-commissioned officers from all nations should manage the army; and I hold that it is not too late yet to do that, if we allow Russia to occupy Manchuria, and I do not see how we can prevent it. As we have got 64 per cent. of the trade

of China let us manage the rest of the army. It is not a bit too late to do that now, in my humble opinion, and if we do it we shall get the vested interests of all countries all over China, and then there will be a unanimous opinion, shared by all countries, that the open door will be maintained. With regard to this question of fortifying Wei-hai-wei and other places, I should very much like to know if that mystical body the Council of Defence has been consulted over this matter, as far as the fortifying of Wei-hai-wei and other places is concerned, because I do not believe that any naval or military officer would agree to fortifying commercial harbours. Such expenditure is certainly an absolute waste of money, and there can be no objection on the part of the Government to telling the House what commercial harbours are going to be fortified, and why they are going to be fortified. As far as the West Indies go that is a point of naval base, and we have had to fight for the West Indies against many nations, but if we have a fleet big enough we shall not have to go to war at all. I think the Government ought to let the House know how this money is going to be spent as far as the commercial harbours are concerned, because I think the House will object to voting money for the defence of commercial harbours. I will not occupy the time of the House longer, because I shall have another opportunity later on, of opposing, with all the vehemence I can command, this policy in connection with the fortification of Wei-hai-wei.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): The noble Lord has made a number of interesting observations, with many of which I find myself in agreement. On the subject of the fortification of Wei-hai-wei and the commercial harbours, the noble Lord says he will give to that the strongest possible opposition, but how is he going to do it? That is one of the most remarkable features of the position in which we stand. Here is a White paper which has been distributed by the Government for the information of the House, and it is headed 'Military Works Bill Account, 1899.' It is endorsed "Schedule A.—expenditure on services to be undertaken under the Bill. Schedule B.—complete War Office scheme." It is called Schedule A, just as if it was a schedule to this Bill, as if we had any

control over these items. This is issued merely as information *munificentia* of the War Office to us for our gratification, but we have no control over these items. In these War Office Bills for loans, why should we not follow the same course as is pursued in the case of Navy loans, and put in the schedule of the Bill those items which we see here set out in the White paper. If this were done then the noble Lord could move to strike out the item for Wei-hai-wei or any part of it, or he could move to strike out any other item to which he objected. Now he is helpless in the matter, and cannot do so because the Bill comes before us with only this meagre statement of general figures, and the noble Lord cannot oppose the expenditure on Wei-hai-wei if he wishes to do so. He may move to reduce the amount asked for, but that would not affect the Act; and if he succeeded in reducing the amount it would not follow that Wei-hai-wei would be left out. As far as I can remember the Admiralty system, it gives the particulars of the works for which the money is wanted, and in that way it gives the House the power which it ought to possess. Now, Sir, I think of late years we have launched into this system of loans to an extent which is greatly exaggerated. I admit that there is a great convenience in loans when you can contemplate a uniform, steady, and uninterrupted expenditure of money upon a particular service without being exposed to the freaks and vicissitudes of the Estimates. That is a great advantage, no doubt, over the modern system, whereby the money in repayment of the loan—that is the sinking fund which is formed for the repayment of the money borrowed—is put upon the Estimates, for that brings the whole expenditure within the knowledge of Parliament. This does not give information or control over the details of the scheme—I do not mean the minute details, but the general details of the purposes for which the money is wanted. That, I think, is the main circumstance which strikes me in regard to this Bill. The hon. Gentleman the Member for King's Lynn pointed out that we had first a loan of £5,500,000, and now we have a loan for £4,000,000; we are also going to have another £3,000,000, and that makes up a total of £12,500,000 within the space of a very few years. We are asked to vote this £4,000,000

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before the £5,500,000 has been expended, and the War Office do not exhaust the one before they demand the other. Now if these were continuous services we could understand to a certain extent that they should run into each other; but I think it is a little hungry on the part of the Government that, after having got £5,500,000 in 1897 they should come back to us in 1899 with another large proposal of the same kind, before the former sum has been expended. In this White paper which is before us I should like to ask whether the items which are given will complete the service. For instance, there is the sum of £130,000 for Wei-hai-wei, and I will take that item because it has been mentioned before. Will that sum complete the barracks at Wei-hai-wei? Taking the whole question, it will be seen that at foreign stations and barracks the total sum to be expended is over a million of money, and the money provided in this Bill for this purpose is only £450,000, so that we do not know as to any of these items whether the money before us now proposed to be provided will complete the service. I will not now enter upon a discussion of the policy of Wei-hai-wei, although I share the opinion of the noble Lord opposite in regard to it. It seems to me that Wei-hai-wei, having been somewhat of a puzzle and a mystery from the first, Her Majesty's Government are now trying to give consistency and something like reality to it by spending a little money on it. But I cannot see, and never have been able to see, what advantage it will be. If it is to be a minor naval base, it will only detain ships for the purpose of defending it which ought to be available for employment elsewhere. As to the raising of an army there by drilling a few Chinamen in one of our rival spheres of influence, I think that is one of the most original ideas that has ever been propounded as a serious policy. The other point which has been referred to is the policy of the protection of our commercial ports. But there are commercial ports and commercial ports; there are ports the possession of which or the destruction of which by an enemy's ships would be a damage to the naval and military efficiency of the country. I will take such a port as Liverpool or the Clyde. Obviously they are not naval ports, but they are ports which may be used for the refitting and the building

of vessels for the purposes of the Navy; therefore they are almost as valuable as naval ports. But when you come to the mere seaside town, I think the idea of wasting money on such fortifications in seaside towns is not to be contemplated for a moment. I remember some years ago blaming the Admiralty—or those who were responsible for conducting the naval manœuvres under the authority of the Admiralty—for the silly practice of sending ships round the coast of these islands and demanding ransom from the unfortunate towns at which they stopped on their way. I remember that one of the big ironclads found its way to Aberdeen, and the captain immediately sent a polite message ashore demanding £500,000 ransom from the Lord Provost. Now if I had been the Lord Provost I should have answered this captain in two ways. First of all, I should have said, "Our dirty £1 Scotch notes won't do you, the enemy, any good if we give them to you, for we shall at once repudiate them. What you want is sovereigns, and we have not got £500,000 in sovereigns in Aberdeen, or even in the whole of Scotland. Will you be good enough to call some time about the middle of next week, and then I may have got down from the Bank of England enough sovereigns to pay this ransom." My second reply would have been, "My dear captain of the enemy's ship,—You are going to destroy my town if I don't pay you this ransom: will you be good enough to go on and blaze away?" I should advise him to do that because every shot that he fired would cost him a great deal more than all the damage it would have done to the town. On the whole I think that the people of Aberdeen and other towns by the seaside may sleep quite comfortably in their beds and not be in the least afraid. I am using that argument quite beside the superior argument of my hon. friend opposite and of the noble Lord, that of course the Navy ought to prevent the possibility of such a thing happening. If the Navy cannot prevent it then no fortifications can. I hope, therefore, that none of this money will be spent on any such purpose as that. But I draw a great distinction between such places as I have been speaking of and places which are either depôts for coal or large harbours, and ports where there is a possibility of large shipbuilding and of beneficial assistance being given to

our fleet. We must provide against all contingences which might be dangerous to such ports as these. I join with the noble Lord in saying that I am not willing to put any impediment in the way of this money being voted, because a responsible Government approves of it, and I will not stand in the way of anything which is on their responsibility considered necessary for the national defence. I hope, however, that even yet we will be furnished in the schedule to the Bill with the particulars contained in the White Paper. That would enable Parliament to keep control over the expenditure not in a meddling or interfering way with those carrying out that expenditure—but it would entail that authority, full knowledge, and power of Parliament which I think are essential for control over the expenditure of public money.

*MR. WYNDHAM: I feel it is only due to the right hon. Gentleman that I should rise at once to give such answers as I can to the criticisms which he has passed on this measure. I welcome the general support with which the right hon. Gentleman concluded his speech. We are glad to think that the responsible leader of the Opposition feels bound to support the Government of the day in any claim they make for the necessary defences of the Empire. The right hon. Gentleman began his speech—and referred to the same topic at the end—by suggesting that we might have followed a more convenient form of presenting our scheme to the House, and he suggested that it would have been rather better if we had followed exactly the precedent of the Naval Works Act. Instead of that we have followed the precedent of the Military Works Act of 1897. I have read the Debate on that Act very closely, and I am not aware that any section of opinion in this House found much fault with that method of presenting an absolutely similar scheme. I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that under the method we have adopted he has all the information given in the plan of the Naval Works Act, and he has also ample opportunity for criticising the policy of the Government. He himself has disclaimed any idea that it would be possible to watch minutely over the details of a large scheme of this kind—such as that a barrack in such a place should have been built for a lesser sum, or that a

little money was wasted here or there—but he wishes to keep control over our policy. We are asking for four millions, and in respect of the barracks portion of that scheme, we have given in an explanatory schedule the names of all the stations at which we intend to spend money; and we have classified those stations in a series of classes the purpose of which is perfectly evident. The right hon. Gentleman took as an illustration of the kind of inconvenience he anticipated the proposed expenditure of £130,000 upon Wei-hai-wei; and he said that they could not control our policy in that respect, because this particular sum was not in the schedule to the Bill but only in the explanatory schedule; but I venture to think that he or any other Member of the Opposition could move the reduction of the sum we propose to take for barracks by £130,000 in respect of Wai-hai-wei.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: We could not do it, because Wei-hai-wei is not mentioned in the Bill. I do not think it would be in order.

*MR. WYNDHAM: As to points of order I am not a very good judge, but I am bound to say that I believe if a Minister in charge of a measure of this kind states in a Parliamentary Paper that he has taken £130,000 for a certain purpose, it would be competent for the right hon. Gentleman to move a reduction of that amount if he disapproved of the purpose for which it was intended. Either he would be unsuccessful in the Division Lobby or he would be successful. If he were unsuccessful it would be taken that the majority of the Members of this House approved of our policy. But if he were successful we should either have to abandon our policy with respect to Wei-hai-wei or abandon this bench. I think, therefore, that the right hon. Gentleman has ample control over any question of policy embodied in this scheme. Let me remind the House how much information we do give. In the explanatory memorandum we have given full information as to the total sum we mean to expend on barracks. We have also undertaken in the Bill to begin no service which cannot be completed for the total sum in the schedule, and we have also undertaken to publish at the beginning of every session, with the Estimates, a statement of the

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sum which we expect to spend on the different services in the course of the financial year. Therefore the right hon. Gentleman will always be in a position to know what we are doing. The alternative plan of bringing in successive Bills is one to which much inconvenience attaches, and it does not facilitate criticism by the Opposition of the policy of the Government of the day. The right hon. Gentleman followed on the lines of attack pursued by those who preceded him in the Debate, though certainly he did not push the attack with as much conviction as other hon. Members did. He deprecated the frequent use of loans in place of Estimates in this respect, but the hon. Member for East Mayo and the hon. Member for King's Lynn went a great deal further and spoke about going back to the good plan of providing for these services out of the Estimates. But that never had been the "good old plan." There have been Loan Bills in 1860, 1872, 1888, 1890, and 1897. As regards barracks, that service has been almost entirely met by Loan Bills, because it has been found quite impossible to do so by the alternative plan of Estimates. The idea that we could proceed by Estimates is altogether beside the mark. It may be my own fault that such an idea exists, because, in introducing the resolution on which this Bill is based, I adopted, or attempted to adopt, the plan of debating by reference. Legislation by reference is sufficiently confusing, but Debate by reference is worse, and perhaps I altogether failed to convey my meaning. I referred the right hon. Gentleman to the Report of the Committee on the Army Estimates of 1888-89, and to the speech of my right hon. friend the Under Secretary of Foreign Affairs, in bringing in the Works Bill of 1897. In the Report of that Committee, and in the speech of my right hon. friend, there are arguments to which it is very hard to find a reply in favour of proceeding by loan rather than through the Estimates. Assume for a moment that you are attempting to recast the barrack system of this country by the Estimates. As hon. Members are aware no new service can be begun until the particular Vote for it has passed the House, and the War Office would not be justified in taking any preliminary steps, such as to survey land, until the Vote for that par-

ticular service had been passed by this House, perhaps in the middle of August. That would mean that we should lose all the best building months in the year, and we should find ourselves just getting under way as the frost set in. The result would be that each year the programme for that year would be left unfinished, and at the end of their term of office the Government would have to leave to their successors a number of half-completed edifices. It is considerations such as these which have led preceding Governments and this Government to adopt a plan of loan instead of the plan of Estimates. But the right hon. Gentleman says, "That is all very well, but you are coming to us rather soon. You came in 1897, and you are coming back again in 1899." I endeavoured to point out the other day why we have come back so soon. The reason is that in 1897 and 1898 Parliament sanctioned an increase of 25,000 to the Army, and it was incumbent on us to give them a roof and four walls. The hon. Member for King's Lynn wished to know what was meant by "Staff and contingencies, £190,000." It means pretty well the architect's and clerk of works' bills. I believe in civil life they amount to about 5 per cent. in connection with the mere execution of the work placed in the hands of the architect and clerk of works, and the same applies to military works. Five per cent. on the amount would be £200,000, but we have reduced it by £10,000, because part of the total of £4,000,000 will be spent in the purchase of land. The other main line of criticism has been directed against us in respect of the defence works portion of the Bill, and the right hon. Gentleman expressed the hope that we were not going to spend more money upon watering places. That is not our intention. He was good enough to say that in respect of the Clyde and the Bristol Channel it might be right to spend a certain sum of money on defence, and also to give confidence to the people of this country. I should really like to repudiate the charge that we have given no information. It has been said by the hon. Member for East Mayo that we have not given an atom of information, and the hon. Member for King's Lynn also said we gave no information. I gave a great deal of information the other day, and I believe that a third of my speech was

devoted to indicating the kind of places on which we intend to spend money on defences, and I thought I made it plain. I cannot understand how anyone can come forward now and say that we are going to spend enormous sums on the defence of commercial ports. It is asked how much money will be required in respect of these defence works. In the Act of 1897 we asked for £1,120,000; this year we are asking for £1,000,000. If we include all the money spent for defence purposes on the annual Estimates of the last ten years, and add to them the additional sum of £306,000, which we believe will be necessary in order to make the defence works of the empire a going concern, we arrive at a total of £3,000,000, sanctioned, asked for, or contemplated, in a period that has already lasted for ten years. That is not 1 per cent. on the expenditure on the Army and Navy during that period. How, therefore, can it be contended for one moment that we are abandoning our old policy and going in for building castles on the sea-shore? And of this £3,000,000 for defence works the greater part will go for services the value of which has been recognised by my noble friend the Member for York and by the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition. The greater part of it will go to make secure our principal naval bases, our secondary naval bases, our coaling stations, and our strategic harbours. None of our experts have a shadow of doubt as to the value of these services. There are not more than three or four men who doubt that money can be well expended upon them. But obviously they will absorb by far the larger part of the £3,000,000, and will leave only a comparatively small portion for the defence of commercial ports. When it is suggested that we have been pursuing a War Office programme, and have not consulted the First Lord of the Admiralty, I would remind the House that the allocation of these sums was decided first upon local reports which were sent up to the Joint Naval and Military Committee. That Committee submitted a further recommendation to the Committee of Defence of the Cabinet. In this case, the Committee of Defence of the Cabinet referred the question to a conference of experts, and the sailors had as much to say on the matter as the soldiers. As to the nature of these defence works, they are prac-

tically earthworks; but the ground must be very carefully levelled in order that the guns may be laid and aimed with absolute accuracy, and the works must be stable in order that the level of the guns may be retained. There is no idea of going back to the brick-and-mortar school. We feel that a great deal is to be gained by leaving the exact location of these defence works shrouded in a little mystery. It is better that people should know that a certain number of our ports are protected, and then they will think twice before trying to make a systematic list of those which are and those which are not protected. Our policy in respect of defences is, with the exception of Wei-hai-wei, practically supported by my noble friend the Member for York and by the Leader of the Opposition, and hardly any criticism has been passed on the barracks portion of the Bill. I hope I have met the criticisms which have been advanced, and that I have explained that the method we have followed is the most convenient, and that it will give the Opposition every opportunity of criticising the policy of the Government.

MR. BUCHANAN (Aberdeenshire, E.): I venture to express the hope that the First Lord of the Treasury will agree to the adjournment of this Debate. This is one of the most important Bills of the session. We have all fresh in our recollection the speech delivered by the Under Secretary for War, when he introduced this Bill, in which he stated that this Bill was a substantial part of the programme of imperial defence laid before the country by the present Government. It is an essential part of that programme, and it is quite impossible that it can be adequately discussed in one and a half hours at the end of the evening. It has very important military aspects and very important financial aspects, and in the few minutes now at my disposal I would wish to deal with one or two of these financial aspects. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition has already called attention to the fact that we are taking part in a very large scheme for the construction of barracks by means of a loan. The Under Secretary for War said it was always the practice, and that it was done in 1860, 1872, 1890, and 1897. True, in 1860, under Lord

Palmerston's scheme, money was borrowed for large fortifications, but that was a new departure. In 1872 there was a further step in the same direction—one which financial authorities did not approve of; but from 1872 to 1887 no further step was taken until the Imperial Defence Act was brought forward in the latter year, and from that year to this we have had a succession of Bills brought forward for the construction of barracks and other military works by means of borrowed money, thereby relieving the military Estimates of a charge they had previously borne. The Under Secretary for War contends that it is impossible to construct military works out of the Estimates. That is all nonsense. It has been done repeatedly in the past and is still done to a very considerable extent by a much greater military power than this country is. At the present moment India builds all her barracks out of the revenue of the year, and not a single rupee is borrowed for that purpose. If that is possible in a country like India, surely it is possible in the United Kingdom with its vast financial resources. There is a very strong objection to constructing these barracks by means of loans. If they were constructed under a Vote as in the past, Parliament would retain control over the military and naval financial resources of the year, and it has never shown in the past any reluctance to continue expenditure on work once authorised. I defy anyone to point out a case of a great military work in which Parliament refused to vote sufficient sums once it was authorised. There is also another objection to this system. The Under Secretary for War tells us that this Bill contains essential military works which are required to be constructed within the next three or four years. But how are they going to be paid for? Under this Bill essential military works required during the next three or four years are to be paid for during the course of the next thirty years, and at a time of great prosperity like the present you are actually going to spread over thirty years payment for work which you say is essential during the next three or four years. In the bogus schedule which has been attached to the Bill you have put in the works to be constructed under this four millions, but you also put in further works which will have to be constructed in order to

make this scheme complete. That is throwing a burden which this generation ought to bear on our successors.

It being midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

BOARD OF EDUCATION [SALARIES].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Motion made, and Question proposed—

“That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of a salary, not exceeding £2,000, to the President of the Board of Education, and of salaries and remuneration to the secretaries, officers, and servants of the Board, in pursuance of any Act of the present session to provide for the establishment of a Board of Education for England and Wales.”—(*Sir John Gorst.*)

DR. CLARK (Caithness): I beg to move that you, Sir, report Progress, and ask leave to sit again.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (SIR JOHN GORST, Cambridge University): I hope the hon. Member will allow us to take this stage, which is really only formal.

DR. CLARK: I object to public money being spent on education in England when £75,000 is being lost to Scotland. This is the only control we have over this Bill, as it is to be sent upstairs to a Committee.

Committee report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

SUPPLY [30TH JUNE].

Resolutions reported.

CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES, 1899-1900.

CLASS I.

1. “That a sum, not exceeding £29,936, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, for payments under the Tramways and Public Companies (Ireland) Act, 1883, the Light Railways

(Ireland) Acts, 1889 and 1893, the Tramways (Ireland) Act, 1895, and the Railways (Ireland) Act, 1896.

during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, for the Salaries and Expenses of the General Valuation and Boundary Survey of Ireland."

CLASS II.

2. "That a sum, not exceeding £2,797, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Household of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland."

3. "That a sum, not exceeding £1,229, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of the Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests for Ireland."

4. "That a sum, not exceeding £3,900, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Public Record Office in Ireland, and of the Keeper of State Papers in Dublin."

5. "That a sum, not exceeding £12,113, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, for the Salaries and Expenses in the Department of the Registrar-General of Births, etc., and the Expenses of Collecting Agricultural and other Statistics in Ireland."

6. "That a sum, not exceeding £7,071, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment

7. "That a sum, not exceeding £24,739, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of Public Works in Ireland."

CLASS IV.

8. "That a sum, not exceeding £21,724, be granted to Her Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1900, for sundry Grants in Aid of Scientific Investigation, etc., and other Grants."

Resolutions agreed to.

**METROPOLIS MANAGEMENT ACTS
AMENDMENT (BYE-LAWS) BILL
[Lords].**

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 :—

Committee report Progress; to sit again this day.

**REFORMATORY SCHOOLS AMEND-
MENT BILL [Lords].**

Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; read 3^d, and passed.

AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS BILL

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged :—Bill withdrawn.

Adjourned at a quarter after
Twelve of the clock.

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HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 4th July 1899.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with :—

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 14).

Also the Certificate that no further Standing Orders are applicable to the following Bill :—

MILLWALL DOCK.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

DUBLIN CORPORATION BILL.

Witnesses ordered to attend the Select Committee.

BLACKPOOL IMPROVEMENT BILL.

WALKER AND WALLSEND UNION GAS (ELECTRIC LIGHTING) BILL.

LOWESTOFT PROMENADE PIER BILL.

Committee to meet on Friday next.

CITY AND BRIXTON RAILWAY BILL.

MIDLAND AND SOUTH-WESTERN JUNCTION RAILWAY BILL.

Committee to meet on Thursday next.

INVERNESS HARBOUR BILL [Lords].

Commons Amendments considered, and agreed to, with an Amendment ; and Bill returned to the Commons.

ROCHDALE CANAL BILL [Lords].

Reported with Amendments.

DUBLIN CORPORATION BILL.

DUBLIN CORPORATION (MARKETS) BILL.

Leave given to the Select Committee not to sit To-morrow until Twelve o'clock.

VOL. LXXIII. [FOURTH SERIES.]

LONDON UNITED TRAMWAYS BILL.

Moved, That the Order made on the 9th day of March last, "That no Private Bill brought from the House of Commons shall be read a second time after Tuesday the 27th day of June next," be dispensed with, and that the Bill be read 2^a; agreed to ; Bill read 2^a accordingly, and committed.

DERWENT VALLEY WATER BILL.

Moved that the Order made on the 9th day of March last, "That no Private Bill brought from the House of Commons shall be read a second time after Tuesday the 27th day of June next," be dispensed with, and that the Bill be read 2^a; agreed to ; Bill read 2^a accordingly, and committed, the Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

TAFF VALE RAILWAY BILL.

Read 3^a, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

WARRINGTON CORPORATION BILL.

Brought from the Commons ; read 1^a; and referred to the Examiners.

REFORMATORY SCHOOLS AMENDMENT BILL [Lords].

Returned from the Commons agreed to.

FISHGUARD WATER AND GAS BILL.

Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to.

BURY CORPORATION BILL [Lords].

BURY CORPORATION WATER BILL [Lords].

Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments.

LONDON AND SOUTH-WESTERN RAILWAY BILL [Lords].

Reported from the Select Committee with Amendments.

MILTON CREEK CONSERVANCY BILL.

The Queen's consent signified ; and Bill reported with Amendments.

BIRMINGHAM CORPORATION BILL.

Reported with Amendments.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL.

Committee for the consideration of the said Bills; viz.,

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 5) BILL.

E. Abingdon,

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 7) BILL.

E. Lauderdale (chairman),

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 8) BILL,

E. Mayo,

L. Llangattock,

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 11) BILL.

L. Wandsworth;

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (GAS) BILL.

agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly: the Committee to meet on Tuesday next, at Twelve o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDER (HOUSING OF WORKING CLASSES) BILL.

GREAT WESTERN AND GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY COMPANIES' BILL.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (POOR LAW) BILL.

Leave given to the Select Committee not to sit again until Friday next.

Read 3^a (according to Order), and passed.

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDER (No. 1) BILL.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (1898-99).

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2) BILL.

I. Associations constituted under the Voluntary Schools Act, 1897;

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 3) BILL.

II. Associated schools and amounts of aid-grant paid;

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) PROVISIONAL ORDERS (HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES (No. 2) BILL.

III. Unassociated schools and amounts of aid-grant paid.

Read 3^a (according to Order), and passed.

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS.

MANCHESTER CORPORATION (GENERAL POWERS) BILL.

Returns of accidents and casualties as reported to the Board of Trade by the several railway companies in the United Kingdom during the three months ended 31st March, 1899; in pursuance of the Regulation of Railways Act (1871), 34th and 35th Victoria, chap. 78; together with reports of the inspecting officers of the Railway Department to the Board of Trade upon certain accidents which were inquired into.

DARWEN CORPORATION BILL.

LONDON AND NORTH-WESTERN (NEW RAILWAYS) BILL.

LONDON AND NORTH-WESTERN (ADDITIONAL POWERS) BILL.

BROMPTON AND PICCADILLY CIRCUS RAILWAY BILL.

TRADE REPORTS (1899) ANNUAL SERIES.

PIER AND HARBOUR PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 2.) BILL.

No. 2305. Roumania;

No. 2306. Turkey (Damascus);

WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL BILL.

No. 2307. China (Chefoo);

No. 2308. China (Kin Kiang).

DERWENT VALLEY WATER BILL.

LIQUOR LICENSING LAWS (ROYAL COMMISSION).

Report from the Committee of Selection, that the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select

Final Report of Her Majesty's Commissioners appointed to inquire into the

operation and administration of the laws relating to the sale of intoxicating liquors; with a general index to the previous reports, evidence, &c.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

COLONIAL FORTIFICATIONS ACT, 1877.

Representations, dated 3rd July, 1899, of Secretary of State for the Colonies and Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury, that it is expedient that certain properties held in trust for the defence of the colony of New South Wales should be transferred to the Government of that colony; and draft of an Order in Council for giving effect to above representations.

LAND REGISTRATION (ENGLAND).

Land Transfer Rules, June, 1899.

CIVIL LIST PENSIONS.

List of all pensions granted during the year ended 20th June, 1899, and charged upon the Civil List.

SAVINGS BANKS AND FRIENDLY SOCIETIES (POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANKS FUND) (SAVINGS BANKS FUND) (FRIENDLY SOCIETIES FUND).

Accounts for the year ended 31st December, 1898.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

STANDING COMMITTEE.

Report from the Committee of Selection for the Standing Committee, that the Committee have added the Lord Wandsworth to the Standing Committee; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

YOUTHFUL OFFENDERS BILL [Lords].

Reported from the Standing Committee with Amendments: The Report thereof to be received on Thursday next; and Bill to be printed as amended. [No. 153.]

ELEMENTARY EDUCATION (DEFECTIVE AND EPILEPTIC CHILDREN) BILL [Lords].

Reported from the Standing Committee with further Amendments: The Report of the Amendments made in Committee

of the Whole House and by the Standing Committee to be received on Thursday next; and Bill to be printed as amended. [No. 154.]

SUMMARY JURISDICTION ACT (1879) AMENDMENT BILL.

Reported from the Standing Committee with Amendments; The Report thereof to be received on Thursday next; and Bill to be printed as amended. [No. 155.]

EDUCATION OF CHILDREN BILL.

Reported from the Standing Committee without Amendment, and to be read 3^a on Thursday next.

ANCHORS AND CHAIN CABLES BILL.

Read 3^a (according to Order) with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

LONDON GOVERNMENT BILL.

Order of the day for the Third Reading read.

Moved—

"That the Bill be now read 3^a."—(*The Vice-President of the Council.*)

On Question, agreed to.

Bill read 3^a, accordingly, with the Amendments.

Drafting Amendments agreed to.

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: I suppose the Amendments which the noble Duke has proposed are all drafting Amendments, but no notice whatever has been given of them, and they are not on the Paper.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (The Duke of DEVONSHIRE): In reply to the noble Marquess, I think I can safely say that all the Amendments I have proposed are drafting Amendments, with the exception, possibly, of one which has been suggested to me on behalf of the County of Middlesex. At present there appears to be some doubt whether the County Council of Middlesex would be entitled to be heard before the Commissioners upon a proposal which has been embodied in the Bill. It refers to the question of compensation for any part of the County of Middlesex which may be taken away.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: I think it is worthy of notice that the noble Duke now proposes to give to the County Council of Middlesex the right to be heard, which he refused to give to the London County Council. I do not think the noble Duke is treating the County Council of London justly.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: The case is quite a different one. The County Council of London has the right to be heard before the Commissioners and the Committee of the Privy Council in any matter in which it is interested. What the noble Lord opposite desired was that the London County Council should be heard in cases in which that body was not interested.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: The London County Council is interested in every scheme promulgated under this Bill, which applies to the County of London. All the proposed boroughs are within the County of London, and, moreover, the London County Council is obliged to find the money for the expense of the schemes.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: I have not the slightest doubt but that the County Council will be heard in every case where it can show that it is interested. What we refused to give to the London County Council was power to express its opinion in matters in which it was not interested.

THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: I have placed upon the Paper an amendment to Clause 22, which provides that the election of churchwardens for the ecclesiastical parish remaining attached to a mother church shall be vested in the inhabitants of such ecclesiastical parish. I should be glad to know if the noble Duke the Lord President has any remarks to make upon this Amendment. I shall then be able to judge whether or not it will be necessary for me to move it.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: Instructions will be given to the Commissioners to the effect that their general policy ought to be to vest the appointment of churchwardens in the inhabitants of the ecclesiastical parishes. I trust that that will satisfy the right rev. Prelate,

because it is considered that the Amendment which he proposes will cause inconvenience, chiefly in consequence of the indefinite meaning to be attached to the expression "Mother Church."

THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: My Lords, I am quite satisfied with what the noble Duke has said. I believe that if the instructions to which he has referred are given, my object will be achieved. I do not propose, therefore, to move the Amendment.

The Earl of PORTSMOUTH had the following Amendment upon the Paper:

"After Clause 23 to insert as new clause: 'The members of borough councils, borough treasurers, and town clerks, during the time that they hold office under this Act shall enjoy exemption from service on all juries.'"

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: The Earl of Portsmouth, I understand, is not in his place to move this Amendment, but it could not be accepted in its present form. I am willing, however, that an Amendment in the following terms should be inserted—

"Members of a council of a borough, and the town clerk and treasurer for the time being of a borough, shall be exempt from serving on any jury summoned in the County of London."

The noble Earl's Amendment would make them exempt from serving on juries no matter where those juries were summoned.

THE MARQUESS OF RIPON: Is there any precedent for such an exemption? Perhaps the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack can inform us.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (The Earl of HALSBURY): I confess that the acceptance of any such Amendment as the one which the noble Duke has read comes upon me by surprise. I entertain considerable doubt in regard to it as a matter of form, and it seems to me entirely outside the purview of this Bill, in addition to which it is an alteration of the general Jury Law which I think requires consideration.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: I had received advice in a contrary sense to that expressed by the noble and learned Lord; but if the noble and learned Lord is of opinion that this Amendment is not with-

in the scope of the Bill, I will not move it.

Bill passed, and returned to the Commons.

QUESTIONS.

LONDON SCHOOL BOARD AND RE- HOUSING OF DISPLACED PERSONS.

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE: My Lords, I beg to ask Her Majesty's Government whether their attention has been called to the action of the London School Board in respect of the site for a proposed school in Bethnal Green, known as the Wood Street site, whereby, although more than twenty houses occupied by persons belonging to the labouring classes are taken, the Standing Orders of the House of Lords as to the re-housing of persons displaced are evaded; and, if so, would Her Majesty's Government, in view of the growing seriousness of the overcrowding problem in East London, take steps to prevent such evasion in the future. The question I have ventured to put on the Paper raises considerations which, I think, are worthy of your Lordships' attention, and I trust Her Majesty's Government will be able to satisfy me and your Lordships that they will take some action in the matter. My question in effect suggests—in fact, it states—that the London School Board have deliberately—I, personally, think wilfully—ignored the Standing Orders of your Lordships' House. The Standing Orders to which I refer provide that, when the London School Board acquire land compulsorily, or otherwise, for the purpose of erecting a Board School, there should be in the Bill which they submit to Parliament a clause compelling them, if they acquire more than 20 houses, to submit a scheme to the Home Secretary for the re-housing of the labouring classes displaced. I will, with your Lordships' permission, read the clause to which I refer:

"The Board shall not, under the powers of this Act, purchase or acquire in any parish in the Metropolis, as defined by the Metropolis Management Act, 1855, 20 or more houses which, on the 15th of December last were, or have been since that day, or shall hereafter be occupied either wholly or partially by persons belonging to the labouring class as tenants or lodgers unless and until:—

"(a) They shall have obtained the approval of the Secretary of State for the Home Department to a scheme for providing new dwellings for such number of persons as were residing in such houses on the 15th day of

December last, or for such number of persons as the Secretary of State shall, after inquiry, deem necessary, having regard to the number of persons on or after that date residing in such houses and working within one mile therefrom, and to the amount of vacant suitable accommodation in the immediate neighbourhood of such houses, or to the place of employment of such persons, and to all the circumstances of the case; and

"(b) They shall have given security to the satisfaction of the Secretary of State for the carrying out of the scheme."

It seems to me perfectly clear by that clause that if the School Board acquire more than 20 houses, the Standing Orders compel them to submit a scheme to the Home Secretary for re-housing the people displaced. A question was addressed in the other House to the Home Secretary in nearly the same words as my question, which I had intended to ask on Friday last, but which, at the request of Her Majesty's Government, I deferred until to-day. The Home Secretary, in replying to the question in the other House, said he had been informed by the School Board that the facts were as stated in the question, and that no obligation to re-house arose under the Statute. I contend that the necessity did arise. The interpretation which the School Board have put upon the Act is that, if they acquire a site consisting of more than 20 houses, and do not take in any one year the whole number, they by that means can evade the Act. The instance which I am going to refer to is known as the Wood-street site, in the parish of St. Matthew's, Bethnal Green. It contains 21 houses, and prior to 1895 the London School Board acquired the whole of these houses. They did not, however, schedule the whole of them in the Bill which they promoted in that year. They scheduled 13 in 1895, leaving the remaining eight houses to be scheduled in 1896. As your Lordships will see by the plan, this is a square block of buildings, and the Home Secretary, when the Bill of 1896 came before him, obviously did not notice that the 13 houses scheduled in the Act of 1895 were part of the same site as that upon which the eight houses stood which were scheduled in the Act of 1896. The property was taken over in the early spring of this year, and all the tenants were ejected at one given moment. I think that is an important fact, because it shows that there was no special reason why the School Board took 13 houses in one year

and eight the next. If this was an isolated case there might be some explanation from the London School Board which might be satisfactory, and which would show that they had not deliberately tried to evade the Standing Orders of your Lordships' House. It is not, however, an isolated case. I could quote many instances to your Lordships which would show that this is a policy which the London School Board has adopted in order, in my humble opinion, to evade the Standing Orders of this House. In 1896 they acquired a site for a School Board consisting of 46 houses. It that year 11 houses were scheduled in their Bill. In the following year they scheduled 19 houses, just the number to escape the notice of the Home Secretary, and they had so far succeeded in deceiving the Home Office that when the Home Secretary replied to a question asked in the House of Commons, he said he understood there were no reasons why the School Board should rehouse the people displaced, because they did not acquire twenty houses. There is no problem which is so difficult to deal with as the housing of the working classes, and there are no evils of so grave a character as the evils resulting from overcrowding. It seems to me that Her Majesty's Government should be able to answer this question and tell us whether the action of the London School Board is legal, and, if it is legal, whether it is a fair and equitable interpretation to be put by a public body upon the Standing Orders of your Lordships' House, and whether in the face of the facts which I have ventured to put before them, they will take steps to prevent the recurrence of such a proceeding.

LORD BELPER: I am afraid I cannot give a very complete answer to the whole of the remarks which the noble Earl has made, although I can answer the question placed upon the Paper. The noble Earl has already stated the fact that the attention of the Government has been called to this matter by a question which was put to the Secretary of State for the Home Department in the other House. That question was asked on Friday last, and the answer which the Home Secretary then gave was that he would communicate further with the London School Board in reference to the matter, and, if necessary, with the Education Department. The communications are still going on, and, as the Home Office is not

fully informed of the whole of the details, the House will understand that I cannot express any definite opinion, upon it. I believe the facts were that the scheme of the London School Board was presented to the House in the two Provisional Orders—one in 1895, and the other in 1896—and that in neither of them were twenty houses taken. The attention of the Home Secretary was not called to the fact that these two Provisional Orders might be said to refer to one scheme. It is not, of course, for me to express any opinion, on the imperfect information which the Home Office has at present, as to what might have been the reasons why the scheme was presented in two Provisional Orders instead of one. I can, however, assure the noble Earl that the Home Office is fully alive to the importance of the point which he has brought before the House, and that it will be their duty, after they have had the fullest information from the parties concerned, to form their opinion on the case and to consider what steps may be necessary in the future—if the facts are as alleged—to ensure that the Standing Orders of your Lordships' House should be strictly conformed with. I cannot go further into the matter until the correspondence has come to an end.

*LORD REAY: My Lords, the indictment of the noble Earl is really directed as much against the Education Department as it is against the London School Board, because it refers to Bills which have been promoted in Parliament by the Education Department. There are two culprits—the School Board and the Education Department, if culprits they are. The School Board cannot act in this matter without the sanction of the Education Department. With regard to the Wood Street site, I will explain to your Lordships how that matter stands. In 1895 power was taken to purchase thirteen houses. Under the Education Department Provisional Order Confirmation (London) Act of 1895 the rehousing obligation only applies to houses which are purchased or acquired under the powers conferred by the Act. There was no clause in the Act of 1895 such as appeared in the later Act of 1896—that the obligation should also apply to houses which were taken by agreement. Of the thirteen houses for which powers were conferred by the Act of 1895, seven were

purchased by the School Board by auction. Therefore the obligation of rehousing under the Act of 1895 only applies to six houses. Under the Act of 1896 power is given to take eight houses. Add eight to six and you get fourteen. Therefore the London School Board were well within the limit of twenty houses so far as the Wood Street site is concerned. As regards the answer given by my noble friend on behalf of the Home Office, I need hardly say that he will find the School Board ready in every way to meet the just demands of the Home Office for rehousing in these cases.

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE: I did not quite follow the noble Lord who has just spoken, and who is the Chairman of the London School Board, in his remarks as to there being a difference between the Act of 1895 and the Act of 1896. So far as I can see, they are substantially the same.

***LORD REAY:** The noble Earl will see that Sub-section 12 of Clause 3 of the Act of 1896 does not occur in the Act of 1895.

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE: I did not know that the London School Board had acquired eight of the houses on this site by auction; but the point I raised is whether it is legal to acquire a certain number of houses one year and others the next year on the same site, and by that means avoid housing the people displaced. The noble Lord who has defended the School Board has referred to one instance. I have deliberately stated that the School Board has adopted this policy in more than one instance. In the face of this fact, I look forward with some hope to Her Majesty's Government taking action to prevent the School Board, and the Education Department as well, pursuing this course in the future.

House adjourned at five minutes after Five of the clock, to Thursday next, at half-past Ten of the clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 4th July 1899.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON LAW, ETC.

Ordered, that the Standing Committee on Law, etc., have leave to sit this day until half-past Three of the clock during the sitting of the House.—(*Sir James Fergusson.*)

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [Lords].

No Standing Orders not previously inquired into applicable.

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills that in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, no Standing Orders not previously inquired into are applicable, viz.:

FYLDE WATER BOARD BILL [Lords].

Ordered, that the Bill be read a second time.

BARRY RAILWAY BILL.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY (NEW RAILWAYS) BILL.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY (VARIOUS POWERS) BILL.

Lords Amendments considered, and agreed to.

ST. JAMES'S AND PALL MALL ELECTRIC LIGHT BILL (by Order).

Consideration of Lords Amendments deferred till Thursday.

COBHAM GAS BILL [Lords].

STRETTFORD GAS BILL [Lords].

Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

YORKE ESTATE BILL [Lords].

Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment.

GLASGOW AND SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY BILL [Lords].

Read a second time, and committed

WARRINGTON CORPORATION BILL.

Ordered, that, in the case of the Warrington Corporation Bill, Standing Order 243 be suspended, and that the Bill be now read the third time. — (*Dr. Farquharson.*)

Bill accordingly read the third time, and passed.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 14) BILL [Lords].**ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISION A ORDERS (No. 15) BILL [Lords].****GAS AND WATER ORDERS CONFIRMATION BILL [Lords].****GAS ORDERS CONFIRMATION (No. 1) BILL [Lords].**

Read a second time, and committed.

WATER ORDERS CONFIRMATION BILL [Lords].

Read a second time, and committed.

PETITIONS.**GROUND RENTS (TAXATION OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES).**

Petitions in favour—From Mossley and Lambeth; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT (1894) AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Glasgow, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

MINES (EIGHT HOURS) BILL.

Petition from Ffrwd, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE.

Petition from London, for extension to women; to lie upon the Table.

POOR LAW AMENDMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1845.

Petition from Meldrum, for alteration of law; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour—From Padwell and Exeter; to lie upon the Table.

SHOPS (EARLY CLOSING) BILL.

Petition of the Leicestershire Trade Protection Society, against; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.**VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS ACT, 1897 (ASSOCIATIONS).**

Copy presented, of Returns of (1) Associations constituted under the Voluntary Schools Act, 1897; (2) Associated Schools and amounts of Aid Grant paid; (3) Unassociated Schools and amounts of Aid Grant paid [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

COLONIAL FORTIFICATIONS ACT, 1877.

Copy presented, of Representations, dated 3rd July 1899, of the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury that it is expedient that certain properties held in trust for the defence of the Colony of New South Wales should be transferred to the Government of that colony, and Draft of an Order in Council for giving effect to above Representations [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS.

Copy presented, of Returns of Accidents and Casualties as reported to the Board of Trade by the several railway companies in the United Kingdom during the three months ending 31st March 1899, etc. [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LIQUOR LICENSING LAWS (ROYAL COMMISSION).

Copy presented, of Final Report of the Royal Commission on the Liquor Licensing Laws, with Index [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

SAVINGS BANK AND FRIENDLY SOCIETIES.

Accounts presented, showing the interest accrued in respect of the securities standing in the names of the Commissioners for the Reduction of the National Debt to the credit of the Post Office Savings Banks Fund for the year ended 31st December, 1898, and of the Fund for the Banks for Savings and the Fund for Friendly Societies for the year ended 20th November, 1898 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 260.]

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos.

2,305 to 2,308 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRAMWAYS (STREET AND ROAD).

Return ordered, "of Street and Road Tramways authorised by Parliament, showing the amount of capital authorised, paid up, and expended; the length of tramway authorised, and the length open for the public conveyance of passengers, down to the 30th day of June, 1899; the gross receipts, working expenditure, and net receipts; the number of passengers conveyed, and the number of miles run by cars during the year ended the 30th day of June, 1899; together with the number of horses, engines, and cars at that date (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 355, of Session 1898)."—*(Mr. Ritchie.)*

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection: That they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure: Mr. Attorney-General and Mr. Butcher; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Solicitor-General and Sir Albert Rollit.

Mr. HALSEY further reported from the Committee: That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures: Mr. Solicitor-General; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Attorney-General.

Reports to lie upon the Table.

TRAWLERS' CERTIFICATES SUSPENSION BILL [Lords].

Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 257.]

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to,—

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 16) BILL,

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 7) BILL,

CORK CORPORATION (FINANCE) BILL,
Without Amendment.

LONDON GOVERNMENT BILL.

SCUNTHORPE URBAN DISTRICT GAS AND WATER BILL.

GREAT CENTRAL RAILWAY BILL.

With Amendments.

Amendments to—

DUNDEE GAS, STREET IMPROVEMENTS AND TRAMWAYS BILL [Lords].

Without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill intituled "An Act to confirm certain Provisional Orders made by the Board of Trade under the Gas and Waterworks Facilities Act, 1870, relating to Farnham Gas, Freshwater Gas, Morecambe Gas, and Newtown and Llanllwchaearn Gas." [Gas Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [Lords.]

And also a Bill intituled "An Act to amend the Isolation Hospitals Act, 1893." [Isolation Hospitals Amendment Bill [Lords.]

LONDON GOVERNMENT BILL.

Lords Amendments to be considered upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 258.]

GAS ORDERS CONFIRMATION (No. 2) BILL [Lords].

Read the first time; referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, and to be printed. [Bill 259.]

QUESTIONS.

WEI-HAI-WEI.

SIR J. COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty what is the approximate estimate of the additional annual expenditure to be borne by the Navy Estimates as a consequence of the adoption of Wei-hai-wei as a permanent secondary naval base.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. GOSCHEN, St. George's, Hanover Square): Till the final arrangements are made I could not say. The amount, I think, is not likely to be very large.

SIR J. COLOMB: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War what is the approximate estimate of the additional annual expenditure to be borne by the Army Estimates as a consequence of the adoption of Wei-hai-wei as a permanent secondary naval base?

*THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Mr. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS, Birmingham, S.): The annual charge for the garrison is estimated at £67,000, with an eventual addition many years hence of £12,000 for non-effective charges. This is irrespective of the initial outlay on works and barracks, and on armament.

SIR J. COLOMB: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty what is the area of the belt of land ten English miles wide along the entire coast line of the Bay of Wei-hai-wei, leased to Great Britain as part of the arrangement for providing Great Britain with a suitable Naval harbour; and what is the length of the land boundary thus dividing territory in British occupation from territory under the influence of Germany.

MR. GOSCHEN: The exact area of the belt of land cannot be given until the boundary line of the leased territory has been finally delimited. The meridian 121 deg. 40 min. east of Greenwich is the dividing line between the territory, the subject of the lease, and the rest of Shan-tung; but until it has been surveyed it is not possible to say what is its exact length.

SIR J. COLOMB: Then are we not in a position to know what must be the military arrangements for the defence of the harbour?

MR. GOSCHEN: We may be in possession of that information without knowing the exact area.

HASLAR HOSPITAL.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether a Deputy Inspector-General has recently been appointed in charge of the Royal Hospital at Haslar, instead of an Inspector-General, though there are three officers of the latter rank available for service at Haslar; and if such appointment has been made, will he explain why the three Inspectors-General have been passed over.

MR. GOSCHEN: Yes, Sir, the facts are as stated. The reason for my choice is that I was determined to select the best man I could find, irrespective of seniority or etiquette, for the administration of the great Naval Hospital at Haslar, which I regard as one of the most important hospitals in the kingdom, and for the efficiency of which I am responsible.

CARNOUSTIE LINKS.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR (Forfarshire) had the following question on the Paper: To ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether he can now give any information as to the interference of the Military authorities at Barry Camp, on Saturday last, with the playing of golf on Carnoustie Links, which are the property of the burgh; and whether he will take steps to prevent any further occurrence of the same kind.

On being called on to put the question, the hon. Member said: I understand the matter has been settled, and I do not wish to press it further.

BRITISH OFFICERS IN THE SOUDAN.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD (York): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War, as to the conditions under which British Military officers were employed in the Soudan, whether he will state to the House the terms of the regulations under which they served as to time and pension; and whether the officers referred to were allowed to count the time employed in the Soudan towards their time for promotion and towards their time for pension.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: The officers referred to are permitted to reckon their service in the Soudan towards their time for promotion under Article 22 of the Royal Warrant for Pay and Promotion, and for retirement under Article 500 (a) and (c).

MILITARY WORKS EXPENDITURE.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War whether Her Majesty's Government propose to give any further information than is contained in the memorandum of the Military Works Bill of 1899 (C. 9367, of 1899) relative to the item of £1,000,000 for defence works; whether it is to be understood that this

item is to be expended for defence works of the nature of fortifications alone, or whether it is proposed to expend any portion of it for any other purpose; and, whether further details, of the nature of those afforded under Head 2, with regard to barracks will be given with reference to the particular places and purposes for which this £1,000,000 is to be expended before the House is asked finally to pass the Bill authorising the expenditure, or whether Her Majesty's Government propose that they should be authorised to borrow and to expend this £1,000,000 without giving any details whatever as to the purposes to which it is to be applied.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: As was stated to the House in introducing the Military Works Loan Resolution, the Secretary of State does not consider it expedient to give details in respect of the proposed defence works.

SIR J. COLOMB: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that these details were given both in the Treasury correspondence in 1884 and in the Works Bill of 1880?

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Am I to understand that the Government propose to carry out the works without giving any details?

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: I have already answered the question, and I suppose that would follow from the answer I have given.

CAPTAIN SINCLAIR: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if he will state, for the year 31st March, 1898, to 31st March, 1899, the amount expended under the Barracks Act, 1890, and the Military Works Act, 1897?

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: The approximate figures are under the Barracks Act, 1890, £176,000; and under the Military Works Act, 1897, £725,000; making a total of £901,000.

WAR OFFICE ESTABLISHMENT.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for War if he can state when the Committee appointed last year to consider the Civil Establishment of the War Office expects to have presented its final Report; what progress has already been made in the reorganisation of the Adju-

tant-General's, Quartermaster-General's, and Financial Secretary's Departments; and whether the Secretary of State will, without waiting for the final Report of the Committee, cause the redundant first division clerks and supplementary clerks who have been superseded to be placed on retired pay.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: I am unable to state when the Committee will be able to present its final Report. The inquiry, as far as it affects the Departments of the Adjutant-General, the Quarter-Master General, and the other high military officials, has only just begun. The Secretary of State is not prepared to anticipate the Report of the Committee.

GENERAL RUSSELL (Cheltenham): I beg to ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether the Committee appointed to consider the Civilian Department of the War Office has yet agreed on its Report; and whether this Report will be laid upon the Table of the House before the War Office Vote is taken.

*MR. J. POWELL-WILLIAMS: As I stated in reply to the hon. Member for South Donegal a few days ago, the inquiry into the Civil Establishment of the War Office, though it has made considerable progress, is yet incomplete. It is impossible to say whether any Report will be made to the Secretary of State before the War Office Vote is taken, but, even if it were, it is not customary to lay upon the Table of the House Departmental Reports of this kind, and no assurance can be given that this rule will be departed from in this instance.

INDIAN PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

SIR SEYMOUR KING (Hull, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his despatch, approving of special terms of retirement for certain service officers of the Indian Public Works Department from Cooper's Hill, has yet arrived in India; and whether he will arrange for its simultaneous publication in this country and in India.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord G. HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The despatch of the Secretary of State has been in the hands of the Government of India for some days, and doubtless the officers who are eligible for

the special terms of pension sanctioned in that despatch have been communicated with. The Government of India do not propose to publish the terms sanctioned by the Secretary of State.

SAMOA.

MR. HOGAN (Tipperary, Mid.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Major Mair, Judge of the New Zealand Native Lands Court, has been appointed a British Consular authority in Samoa; whether he was so nominated at the instance of the Joint Commission; what are the nature and extent of the functions he will exercise; and does he temporarily supersede the regular British Consul in Samoa.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): The officer who has been appointed to act as Consul at Apia during the absence of Mr. Maxse is Mr. Hunter, Chief Police Magistrate of Fiji. During the period of his acting appointment Mr. Hunter will exercise the same functions as Mr. Maxse, whom he temporarily replaces but does not supersede.

NEWFOUNDLAND FISHERIES.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Her Majesty's Government have received any information regarding any disputes or difficulties which have recently arisen with reference to or in connection with the French shore in Newfoundland; and, if so, whether he can state what is the nature of those difficulties or differences, and what methods are being taken to remove them.

*MR. BRODRICK: A telegram was received on the 21st ultimo from the Governor of Newfoundland, reporting that the French senior Naval officer had removed salmon nets belonging to British fishermen on the Treaty shore. No additional particulars have since been received. The British Naval officers will, doubtless, take the requisite steps for the settlement of this difficulty.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Will the Government make inquiry as to how this matter is proceeding, or do they intend to leave it to be fought out by the Naval officers?

[No answer was given.]

TENURE OF HOUSES ABROAD.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can state when the continuation Report, concerning the tenure of houses in towns in foreign countries, ordered last session, will be printed; and whether, seeing that it was promised early this session, he can explain the reason of delay.

*MR. BRODRICK: The Paper was laid before Parliament on the 26th of April last—Commercial, No. 3, 1899.

OUTRAGES ON CHRISTIANS IN ARMENIA.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Foreign Office has received any information as to the alleged Kurdish outrages in Kazabulinik; and whether five villages, chiefly populated by Armenians, were nearly destroyed by Kurds, and over 100 Armenians were massacred, and a number of Armenian women reported as missing; and, if so, will the Foreign Office communicate with the Government of the Sultan with a view to prevent the infliction of further outrages upon the Christian Armenian population.

*MR. BRODRICK: No such information has reached Her Majesty's Government.

MR. FLYNN: Has the Government received no information in the course of the day?

[No answer was given.]

THE TRANSVAAL FRANCHISE.

MR. LAMBERT (Devon, South Molton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can state approximately what number of Uitlanders in the South African Republic have the right to exercise the franchise for the first Volksraad now, and what number would have it presuming the conditions were the same as in the Orange Free State; and if he could state what number would receive it within a reasonable time under Sir Alfred Milner's proposals, and how this would compare with the latest proposals of President Kruger.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): I have not yet

received the information from Sir Alfred Milner. No doubt he has found it necessary to communicate with the British Vice-Consul at Johannesburg, and it may take some time before the information reaches me. I will communicate with the hon. Member as soon as it does, and ask him then to repeat his question.

THE NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE TRANSVAAL GOVERNMENT.

SIR JOHN BRUNNER (Cheshire, Northwich): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, in the present negotiations with the South African Republic, Her Majesty's Government are acting in co-operation and consultation with the responsible Ministers of the Cape Colony.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The Cape Government is not a party to the negotiations between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of the South African Republic, but the High Commissioner is in communication with the Cape Ministers.

MR. J. E. ELLIS (Nottingham, Rushcliffe): Can the right hon. Gentleman assure us that the House will receive any representations that may be made by the Cape Government and sent to Her Majesty's Government by the High Commissioner?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I cannot give any promise. All I can say is that we have received no such communication.

THE PACIFIC CABLE.

MR. HOGAN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the business of the approaching Conference of representatives of the Imperial and Colonial Governments will be limited to a re-adjustment of financial responsibilities in connection with the construction and working of the proposed Pacific Cable, or whether it is proposed to discuss questions generally affecting the telegraphic service of the Empire.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The only purpose of the Conference is to discuss matters relating to the proposed Pacific Cable.

NORTHERN LIGHTS.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he has yet communi-

cated with the Northern Lighthouse Commissioners in regard to the necessity for a beacon on Sgixda Rock, near Port of Ness, Island of Lewis; and, if not, will he communicate with the Commissioners on the subject.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): As stated in my reply to the hon. Member on May 19th, the question of erecting a beacon on Sgixda Rock is one, in the first instance, for the consideration of the Northern Lighthouse Commissioners, as the Board of Trade have no power to initiate. In these circumstances, I have not thought it desirable to make any suggestion to the Commissioners on the subject.

MR. WEIR: May I ask if it is not the fact that the Northern Lights Commissioners are under the control of the Board of Trade?

MR. RITCHIE: The responsibility rests with the Commissioners, and I cannot do anything to interfere with it.

THE "GASPESIA."

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the steamship "Gaspesia" is under detention at St. John's, Newfoundland, for salvage claim; that the captain and crew, upwards of seventy, were ejected from the vessel by the police, and that these men, being unable to obtain their wages, are in a destitute condition at St. John's; and will he state what steps he proposes to take in the matter.

MR. RITCHIE: The circumstances in which this vessel has been seized at St. John's, Newfoundland, on account of salvage claims, and the master and crew ejected from it, are known to me, and are substantially as stated by the hon. Member. Instructions by cable were given to the Superintendent of the Mercantile Marine Office at the port, on the 1st ultimo, to relieve the crew if destitute, and in accordance therewith twelve members of the crew have already been sent to this country, and the remainder are believed to be on their way hither. The claims of the seamen to wages is not a matter with which the Board of Trade can interfere.

THE LIZARD LIGHTS.

MR. FIELD : I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, in view of the allegation that the electric light at the Lizard lighthouses is not efficacious in thick weather, he will cause inquiry to be made of the coast-guards in the neighbourhood of the Lizard lights whether, either from their stations or from any points on their cliff walks, they noticed, in the early morning of 22 May last, when the "Paris" stranded on the Manacles, the Lizard lights were visible or invisible, and, if visible, how far from shore they estimate they could be seen in the direction of the course of a vessel steaming from Cherbourg to clear the Lizard Point.

MR. RITCHIE : I am informed that for navigation reasons the Lizard lights have been so constructed as to be practically obscured from the adjoining coast, but in any case I do not think that the inquiries suggested by the honourable Member could lead to any useful result.

MR. FIELD : Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that oil or gas light penetrates a fog further than the electric light ?

MR. RITCHIE : I believe it to be true that it does so in certain circumstances.

CATTLE-CARRYING VESSELS.

MR. FIELD : I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he is aware that the steamship "J. W. Taylor" which was black-listed on 10th February, 1899, arrived at Deptford on 4th January, 1899, and reported loss of 130 bullocks out of 150 shipped, and loss of 740 sheep out of 1,079 shipped; and whether it is intended that in future an expert outside those having any interest in the vessels shall give a certificate before the prohibition is removed.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. LONG, Liverpool, West Derby) : The facts are as stated in the first paragraph of the hon. Member's question. We do not contemplate any change in our existing procedure in regard to these cases.

MR. FIELD : Is it a fact that the restrictions have been removed from this vessel, and that it is now free to carry cattle ?

MR. LONG : I told the hon. Gentleman so a fortnight ago.

MR. FIELD : This is another vessel.

MR. LONG : No, no.

MR. FIELD : Yes.

MR. LONG : I think the hon. Member referred to both vessels in his previous question. Both were dealt with at the same time and for the same reason.

MR. FIELD : Am I to understand that all the restrictions have been removed from all vessels that were black-listed ?

MR. SPEAKER : Order, order !

MR. FIELD : I will put another question on this.

MR. WILLIAM ALLAN (Gateshead) : Is it a fact that the owners of these steamers have given guarantees as to the suitability of their vessels to carry cattle from the Argentine ?

MR. LONG : Yes, Sir; or the restrictions would not have been removed. They have given the guarantees, and have undertaken to conform to the requirements of the Department.

TITHE RENT-CHARGE (RATES) BILL.

MR. LAMBERT (Devon, South Molton) : I beg to ask the President of the Board of Agriculture a question of which I have given him private notice—namely, whether the total rates paid by the owners of tithes attached to benefices is £175,000 a year, and whether the sum of £244,569 was, at the time of the commutation, added to the titheowners' income for the payment of rates; and whether he will present a Return before the Committee stage of the Tithe Bill, showing what sums were granted for payment of titheowners' rates.

MR. LONG : I only received notice of the question at three o'clock.

MR. LAMBERT : In view of the fact that the Bill is not to be taken on Thursday, I will postpone the question.

MR. LONG : No; unfortunately, I cannot be here on Thursday, but I can answer the question now generally. The figure of £175,000 a year is, I believe,

quite correct. With regard to the £244,569 stated to have been added at the time of commutation to the tithe-owners' income, I cannot say whether that amount is correct without examination, because it may possibly include the additions made by the Tithe Commissioners where they considered that the bargain between the titheowner and the tithepayer was not a fair one. I would point out that it is not a correct description to use the words "added to the tithe-owners' income for the payment of rates." The sum in respect of rates was only added in those cases where a private composition had been made between the titheowner and the tithepayer. The difference between the rates and the commuted sum was received by the tithepayer, so that it is not correct to say that the sum was generally added in respect of rates. It was only added where the rates had been previously paid by the tithepayer and not by the titheowner. It is impossible to present a Return before the Committee stage of the Bill, and I do not think it is necessary, as the whole of the information is obtainable in the Reports and Returns presented by the Tithe Commissioners.

THE PWLLHELI DISASTER.

MR. WILLIAM JONES (Carnarvon, Arfon): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been drawn to the boating calamity that occurred at Pwllheli on Saturday, 1st July, by which twelve persons lost their lives; and whether he can take steps to prevent the overloading of pleasure boats, and so lessen the risks of similar disasters.

MR. RITCHIE: Yes, Sir, my attention has been called to the sad accident to which the honourable Member refers, but the Board of Trade have no power to deal with the question of overloading pleasure boats. Under Section 172 of the Public Health Act, 1875, any urban authority may make bye-laws for the licensing of pleasure boats and the number of persons to be carried therein. Any bye-laws so made are submitted to the Local Government Board.

SIR J. W. MACLURE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that the Corporation of Pwllheli do not require licences for sailing and rowing boats used for passengers, and that there is no limit

enforced as to the number of persons carried; and whether, after the deplorable accident on Saturday, he will compel the authorities to make necessary regulations to prevent such catastrophes.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (MR. CHAPLIN, Lincolnshire, Sleaford): The Corporation of Pwllheli are empowered to make bye-laws for regulating the number of persons to be carried in pleasure boats and vessels, but they do not appear to have exercised the power in this case. I cannot undertake to compel the corporation to make bye-laws of this kind, for I doubt if the powers of the Local Government Board extend so far, and, indeed, I hope it would be unnecessary. But I have already directed a communication to be sent to the corporation on the subject, and I have no doubt they will take the necessary steps forthwith.

CARLOWAY ROAD.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the engineer to the Scottish Office has yet reported as to the manner in which the unspent balance of the grant for the construction of the Carloway Road can best be utilised.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): On the recommendation of the Consulting Engineer of the Scottish Office, it was determined to utilise the unspent balance of the grant for this road on the completion of the section next to the Carloway Harbour. The work is getting on very satisfactorily, and is now far advanced.

SMALL HOLDINGS—BERNERA.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he will state what progress has been made with the scheme for creating small holdings in the Island of Bernera.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: Considerable difficulties have been encountered in this case, and the proposal made to the Board has been more than once changed, but negotiations are still in progress, and it is hoped that the matter may yet be carried through satisfactorily.

CROFTERS' COMMISSION.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the Secretary for Scotland is aware that in an action re-

cently raised by Mr. R. S. Wilmot-Sitwell, of Strathkyle, Ross-shire, against William MacLeod, a decision of the Crofters' Commission, under which MacLeod had been held to be a crofter within the meaning of the Act, has been set aside by the First Division of the Court of Session; and will he consider the expediency of introducing such legislation as may be necessary to render decisions of the Crofters' Commission final.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I have already stated, in reply to a question by the hon. Member in April last, that the Secretary for Scotland cannot undertake to introduce any legislation on the subject referred to, and I should wish to add that it is, in my judgment, quite impossible, consonant with the ordinary principles of liberty, to take away the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court in questions of *ultra vires*.

SECONDARY EDUCATION IN THE HIGHLANDS.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he will state what portion of the grant of £35,000 for secondary education will come to each of the six Highland crofting counties under the Minute of the 27th April last.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: It is impossible to say what portion of the grant referred to will fall to any particular county until the various claims have been submitted through the various burgh and county committees, and have thereafter been considered.

SCOTTISH CLERGYMEN AND POOR RATES.

SIR J. W. MACLURE: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the Presbyterian clergy in Scotland are relieved from the payment of poor rates and other burdens on their manse and other ecclesiastical buildings.

MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: Ministers of the Church of Scotland are not liable to poor rate in respect of their manse. I may point out that, as churches do not belong to the ministers, there are no ecclesiastical buildings in the sense of the question other than manse.

TELEGRAPH CLERKS' HOLIDAYS.

MR. STEADMAN (Tower Hamlets, Stepney): I beg to ask the Secretary to

the Treasury, as representing the Postmaster General, whether it can be stated what steps are being taken to give effect to the promise contained in Paragraph 9 of the Postal Circular of Tuesday, 10th August, 1897, with reference to the winter holidays of telegraph clerks in London; and whether it is intended to introduce any reform in that city next year identical with the scheme now in operation at Glasgow.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. HANBURY, Preston): In the provinces it has generally been found practicable to arrange for a better distribution of holidays at a moderate cost, but there are exceptional difficulties in the Central Telegraph Office, and the schemes hitherto framed have been too costly for adoption in that office. It is proposed to refer the question to a Departmental Committee at an early date.

THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether it has been brought to his notice that the *Hansard* reporters have failed to obtain from the late Government contractor the back reckonings due to them for copy furnished and money advanced for typewriting the transcript of notes; whether he is aware that the average amount due to each reporter is £60, and that several of these reporters are now, as a consequence, in grave financial straits; whether any guarantee was taken as to the financial position of the contractor when his tender was accepted; and, if not, will he explain on what grounds; and whether, seeing that the Stationery Office has obtained its copy up to date, and that Government business has been facilitated by the reporters having surrendered their notes and transcripts, and in consideration of the conduct of those reporters, who are practically officials of the House, steps will be taken, by means of a special Vote, if necessary, to secure for them payment for labour of which Members of the House have had the benefit.

The following Questions also appeared on the paper:

MR. HEDDERWICK (Wick Burghs): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury

whether the Government accepted the tender of the late contractor for *The Hansard Debates* without any guarantee of his financial ability to carry on the work ; whether he is aware that from time to time the late contractor failed to pay the members of the staff employed to report the Debates of the House the sums due to them for their services ; and that, in spite of such failure, the members of the staff loyally carried out their part of the agreement, and have, since the bankruptcy of the late contractor, supplied the Government with their reports, and so facilitated the business of the Government ; will he explain why, seeing that there are now due to the members of the staff arrears of pay amounting to £60 per man on an average, the Government have refused to make good these arrears ; whether the Treasury are aware that more than one member of the staff has been reduced to severe financial straits in consequence of the treatment mentioned ; and whether he will consider whether he can take any steps to remedy the grievance referred to.

MR. McLAREN (Leicester, Bosworth) : To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he has fully considered the case of the members of the reporting staff of *Hansard Debates*, who, on the failure of the Treasury contractor, were left with considerable arrears of salary, and in some cases of disbursements, unpaid ; whether these officials carried on the work of the Department and ensured the publication of the weekly parts of *Hansard* to Members of the House, notwithstanding that their weekly salaries were not met ; and whether he can come to some arrangement, either directly with them or with the present contractor, so as to reimburse them for losses earned in the public service.

MR. HANBURY : The Government did satisfy themselves as to Mr. Bussy's financial ability, and they further required two guarantors of £500 each from two responsible guarantors. The contract was a remunerative one, and the price paid to the new contractor is the same as that paid to Mr. Bussy. His failure was not due to the contract. The Government cannot, of course, make good arrears of pay due to the employees of all its contractors ; but in this instance I desired to pay the employees out of the payments

due to the late contractor, and was only prevented from doing so by the fact of his bankruptcy, which, of course, made it impossible to favour one set of creditors at the expense of others. In order to assist them as far as possible, we purchased from them copy not delivered to Mr. Bussy, and thereby ensured payment to them for it. Perhaps I may read a letter I have received from the chief of the staff :

"On behalf of the Official *Debates* staff I desire to inform you that the letter which we understand has been addressed to several Members of Parliament with reference to our position in connection with the late contract is totally unauthorised by us or anyone on our behalf, and has been circulated without our consent. We have written to the person whose signature is attached, demanding an explanation."

*MR. McKENNA (Monmouthshire, N.) : May I ask whether the money the right hon. Gentleman desired to pay to the employees was money due to Mr. Bussy or money to be paid out of the Treasury ?

MR. HANBURY : It was money due to Mr. Bussy for copies of *Hansard*.

MR. TENNANT (Berwickshire) : Is it not true that at least two employees of Mr. Bussy have suffered distress of their personal goods on account of this failure ?

MR. HANBURY : I cannot answer that.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES : Is it proposed to take any steps to enforce the liability of the guarantors ?

MR. HANBURY : I have considered that, but I am afraid that, as these reporters were the employees of the contractor, we shall not be able to call upon the guarantors for that.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs) : Has the right hon. Gentleman considered the case of the distressed Member of Parliament who, on the faith of the arrangement which the right hon. Gentleman made with Mr. Bussy, gave him a cheque for the supply of *Hansard* during the session, and is now stranded without any copies of *Hansard*, while other Members who did not show such promptitude in fulfilling their part of their arrangement have been receiving *Hansard* for nothing ?

MR. HANBURY: I am afraid the man who pays in advance before he receives a thing must run the risk of not getting it. What I have done in this instance is to take every step I could to see that these volumes should not be run up to a very high price, and that Members should be able to get them on reasonable terms. I therefore took upon myself to authorise the Stationery Office to buy up the whole of these spare volumes from the Official Receiver at 20 per cent. below their price, and we shall be perfectly willing to let Members have the benefit of that.

MR. BARTLEY (Islington, N.): Inasmuch as we have had this trouble in publishing these Reports for the last ten years, cannot the Treasury now do it properly?

MR. HANBURY: The main difficulty in regard to the Government's undertaking the work is that there is a general opinion throughout the House that we do not want to have speeches reported at full length. If the Government did undertake the work, we should have every Member attacking them for not reporting his speeches fully.

CAPTAIN NORTON: Is it not a fact that the House, and each Member individually, has a certain responsibility towards these reporters, inasmuch—

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member is now, in the guise of a question, making a speech.

CAPTAIN NORTON: Will the right hon. Gentleman answer the last paragraph of my question?

MR. HANBURY: I do not see the necessity for a special Vote.

LIFTS IN PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

SIR J. W. MACLURE: I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he will consider the advisability of providing reasonable facilities in the shape of lifts and hoists at Somerset House and other public offices for persons compelled to attend, and for the officials of the departments, and also for the old servants of the country who have now to mount three or four flights of stairs.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. AKERS DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): Lifts are being gradually

introduced, as funds permit, in those public offices where the necessity for them has been found to exist. Priority is given to those cases which, in the opinion of my Department, are most urgent.

ROMAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITIES.

MR. WOODALL (Hanley): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is now in a position to say when the long-promised Return as to the nature and extent of the provision made for the University Education of Roman Catholics in Foreign Countries and certain British Colonies will be reported to Parliament.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I hope to be able to lay the Papers before the end of the session.

CRIMINAL BUSINESS AT ASSIZES.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.), I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the recent Report of the Bar Council on criminal business at assizes; and whether the Government will, by Royal Commission or otherwise, cause inquiry to be made into the existing circuit system.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I believe there is no reason for a Royal Commission on this subject, as all the facts are already in the hands of the public, or of that part of the public which takes an interest in the matter. Some remedy has already been applied; but I understand that that remedy is insufficient. The matter has for some time been under the consideration of the Lord Chancellor, and I believe he will have some proposals to make of a legislative character before long, either in this House or in another place.

METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE.

LORD CHARLES BERESFORD: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that, owing to the necessity of providing pensions for old servants, the Meteorological Office is about to cut down its expenses by withdrawing the small payments made for observations at York and other stations; and whether, in view of the important national work done by the Meteorological Office, he can see his way to increase the present Government grant, which is only £15,300 a year.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: This question should be addressed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Can the First Lord of the Treasury state what business will be taken for the rest of the week?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: In the first place, I have to correct a statement I made yesterday. We shall not take the Colonial Loans Fund Bill to-day, which stands third on the Orders Paper, but proceed with the other Orders as they stand on the Paper. To-morrow the first Order will be the Irish Industries Bill. I think it would be more convenient not to take the Tithe Rent-Charge (Rates) Bill on Thursday. I shall propose to take it on Monday next, and continue it *de die in diem*. The first Order on Thursday will be the Lords' Amendments to the London Government Bill.

SIR J. COLOMB: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, in view of the fact that the Military Works Bill came on unexpectedly last night, he will undertake that due notice shall be given of the Bill being brought on again, and that the Bill shall not be brought on before Wednesday.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir. The House will see that this is a matter over which I have no control. Hon. Members must be prepared for business coming up in certain contingencies when an ordinary forecast would not suggest its coming up as likely. I hope to take the Bill as second Order on Thursday.

MR. COURTNEY (Cornwall, Bodmin): The Lords' Amendments to the London Government Bill have not yet come down. Will the First Lord adhere to his intention of taking the Amendments on Thursday, if they have not been printed and circulated by that time?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have no reason to suppose that we shall not have the Amendments down from the Lords to-day; and, if so, they will be, of course, printed and circulated at once.

MR. COURTNEY: And in the event of their not coming down to-day?

[No answer was given.]

PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) BILL.

As amended, considered.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): The House will remember that when we were in Committee on this Bill, a certain agreement was arrived at on Clause 5. The object of the clause, of which I now have to move the Second Reading, is to carry out the arrangement that as far as possible the Commission should be formed out of Parliamentary material, Members being drawn from each House. But it is perfectly obvious that it would be necessary, whoever selected the Commissioners, they should not have to go cap-in-hand to every one of the twelve hundred Members of the two Houses of Parliament. The hon. Member for the Bridgeton Division of Glasgow has put down on the Paper some Amendments in which he embodies the idea of having what I may call a Parliamentary panel. I confess that that idea struck me with favour, because it would not only shorten the labours of the Chairman of the Committee of Selection, but it would provide a body from which it would be possible to select the members, and a body which would not be too large. It would, in fact, be a process of winnowing the material from which the members of the Commission could be selected during the succeeding period of twelve months, and it would also always leave a sufficiently large number of Members available for the work. But I could not accept the Amendment for two reasons. In the first place, it so far departed from the scheme which we had arranged as to make the tribunal consist of five Members instead of four. It will be within the memory of the House that in Committee we stated that we thought five would be too cumbersome. And again, there is the further disadvantage that he suggested that the panel should consist of exactly fifty Members.

SIR CHARLES CAMERON (Glasgow, Bridgeton): I did not say exactly fifty, I said not more than fifty.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: Be that as it may, I am stating what I think are the objections to the hon. Gentleman's proposal. We wish to make the provi-

sions as elastic as possible, and the clause of which I am now moving the Second Reading is the outcome of our consideration of the subject. This clause, as hon. Members will see, without exactly prescribing the panel, gives a very strong hint in regard to the manner in which it should be constituted. We provide that the Commission shall consist of four members, and, in the first instance, we suggest that two shall be taken from each House of Parliament; but, in the event of that being impossible, we make it permissible for three to be taken from one House and one from the other. In the last resort, all four may be taken from one House. Then, if all that fails, it is left to the Secretary for Scotland to select a member from the extra Parliamentary panel. There is also power given to him to fill up casual vacancies. I hope hon. Gentlemen will see that I have done my best to carry out the agreement to which we came in Committee, and that I have done so on common-sense lines. There must be some limit in this matter, and I repeat it should not be necessary for the Chairman of the Selection Committee to go cap-in-hand to every Member of the two Houses before he can fill up the Commission. At the same time, we do make it possible that the Commission shall consist entirely of Members of Parliament.

New clause :—

"Formation of Parliamentary Panels: Appointment of Commissioners, in lieu of Clause 5, to be omitted subsequently :—

"(1) When it is determined that Commissioners shall be appointed for the purpose of inquiring as to the propriety of making and issuing a Provisional Order or Orders under this Act, the chairman shall, with due regard to the character and magnitude of the provisions in the proposed Order or Orders, appoint four Commissioners for that purpose, and shall at the same time nominate one of the Commissioners as chairman.

"(2) Standing Orders may, if the two Houses of Parliament think fit so to order, provide for the formation of panels of Members of the two Houses respectively to act as Commissioners under this Act (hereinafter referred to as the Parliamentary panels).

"(3) Subject to Standing Orders as aforesaid, two of the Commissioners shall be taken from the Parliamentary panel of Members of the House of Lords, and two shall be taken from the Parliamentary panel of Members of the House of Commons.

"(4) Subject to Standing Orders as aforesaid, if the chairman shall be unable to appoint Commissioners as in the immediately preceding

sub-section mentioned, three, or if need be all, of the Commissioners may be Members of the same Parliamentary panel.

"(5) Subject to Standing Orders as aforesaid, if the chairman shall be unable to appoint Commissioners as in either of the two immediately preceding sub-sections mentioned, so many persons as are required to make up the number of Commissioners shall be taken by the Secretary for Scotland from the extra-Parliamentary panel hereinbefore mentioned.

"(6) Any casual vacancy among the Commissioners, or in the office of Chairman of Commissioners, caused by death or resignation, or inability to give attendance, such resignation or inability to attend being certified by a writing under the Commissioner's hand, shall be filled up by the Secretary for Scotland by appointing a member of the extra-Parliamentary panel, and in the case of a vacancy in the office of chairman, by nominating as chairman one of the remaining Commissioners.

"(7) Notwithstanding a dissolution of Parliament, any Member of either House of Parliament may continue to act as Commissioner in any inquiry for the purpose of which he has been appointed to act.

"(8) The persons appointed as Commissioners shall have no personal or local interest in the matter of the proposed Order or Orders, and shall, as a condition of such appointment, make a declaration to that effect, provided that Scottish Members of either House of Parliament shall not be disqualified from acting as Commissioners to deal with proposed Orders in which they have no personal or local interest."—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

Brought up, and read the first time.

Motion made and Question proposed—

"That the clause be read a second time."—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (*Stirling Burghs*): I quite recognise that the right hon. Gentleman has fully adhered to the general principles which we insisted upon when we were considering this Bill in Committee, and to the understanding which was agreed to at that time by the Government. The right hon. Gentleman has not accepted the clause proposed by my hon. friend the Member for the Bridgeton Division, because he prefers words of his own, and in regard to that I think he is right, if only on the ground that, as he is the architect of the measure to which we are now placing the coping-stone, it is only right that he should furnish the design of the ornamental part of the structure. I think his general conception is the right one. There would be an obvious inconvenience in saying that the whole of the list of Members of

Mr. A. Graham Murray.

both Houses of Parliament must be exhausted before a nominated member could be appointed, because, if that list had to be gone through, it might possibly occur that, when the last name was reached, the first one or two who had accepted might have changed their minds on the subject. The arrangement which the right hon. Gentleman proposes is a much better one. He leaves it to the Committee of Selection, and gives them a discretion which, having, as I have, a knowledge of the way in which they perform their duties, I think is thoroughly justified. I have, in fact, the utmost confidence in that body. I think the right hon. Gentleman's proposal will prevent a great deal of useless labour, while it will fully carry out the intentions of the arrangement which was agreed to in Committee between the two sides of the House. I recognise fully, not only the spirit in which the clause has been proposed, but the skill with which it has been drafted, and I think the House is indebted to the right hon. Gentleman for having brought the clause forward.

*SIR CHARLES CAMERON: I quite recognise the spirit, also, in which the right hon. Gentleman has framed his proposal, although I do not agree with my right hon. friend as to the manner in which he has carried it out. I hold that if there was any possibility of defeating the intention of the agreement by mere drafting, that possibility has been seized upon in the present instance. What I wish to point out is, that under this clause, as it is now framed, it might be possible never to have recourse to the Parliamentary panel at all. If hon. Members will look at the Bill, they will see that, under Clause 4, it is provided that from the 1st day of January there shall be an extra-Parliamentary panel. Now that provision must be read along with the new clause. The extra-Parliamentary panel is constituted definitely and at once, but before the Parliamentary panels can have any existence it is necessary that Standing Orders shall be passed in both Houses. What guarantee have we that the exigencies of Government business will not prevent such Standing Orders being passed. It may be that the passing of them will be postponed until the end of next session, when, if opposed or criticised, they may be allowed to drop. But,

without these Standing Orders having been passed, the Committee of Selection can do nothing in the matter. I think this is a decided retrogression. The right hon. Gentleman has said that he cannot accept my Amendment. I do not care what Amendment is accepted, or in what words it is couched; all I want is that we shall have machinery which will enable this work to be done. What I wish to point out is that the right hon. Gentleman's Amendment does not compel this Parliamentary panel to be formed. He may, it is true, give hints as to what is to be done, but, on the other hand, those hints may be taken no notice of, or in the absence of a standing order the Committee of Selection may never have an opportunity of considering them at all. It is not my business to make the Bill a workable one, but it is the business of Members on both sides of the House, at all events, to see that the Amendments put upon the Paper carry out the agreement which has been come to. The right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury gave a most sweeping undertaking on this point. He said the intention was that the Commission should be composed of Members of Parliament, and my complaint is that the constitution of the new Commission from Members of Parliament is not secured under this clause. I trust my right hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition will look into this matter a little more closely. The clause, as it stands, embodies an absolutely incorrect principle against which we protested when the Bill was in Committee, and its drafting exactly reverses the compromise and understanding at which we arrived with the First Lord of the Treasury.

MR. ARTHUR ELLIOT (Durham): I am one of the oldest friends of the proposal to hold these local inquiries, and on the motion for the Second Reading of this Bill I gave it my support. But, now we have reached the Report stage, I find that a great transformation has been effected, and the Bill which I supported is utterly and entirely gone. This is an entirely new measure, which rests far more on the authority of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition than it does on the authority of my right hon. friends the Lord Advocate and the Leader of the House. We had before a Bill which set up a

tribunal which was to be a paid tribunal, and which was to hold local inquiries, and to do judicial rather than administrative work such as is now conducted by the Private Bill Committees upstairs. That tribunal was to send the result of these inquiries to Westminster. But now we find it is proposed to substitute for it something in the nature, not of an established tribunal, but a system of sending down four legislators—two Peers and two Commoners—to Scotland to hold inquiries on the spot. And this is done with the assent of the Leader of the Opposition. It has been represented time after time, for many years, that an admirable principle adopted by the Chairmen of Committees of the two Houses was to discourage the appointment on these committees of local politicians; but in the clause of the Lord Advocate there is a provision, amounting, as he says, to a hint, that Scottish Members shall be appointed as members of the Commission. That is a great departure from the principle which has always been laid down. No doubt it is desirable that the members of the Commission should be gentlemen experienced in the examination of witnesses, but instead of that it is merely proposed under this clause to send two Peers and two Commoners to conduct the inquiries. You will get a far more limited number of Members to select from than if the present system were continued of conducting the inquiries upstairs. The extraordinary character of this proposal is only appreciated when we look a little further into the Bill. What was wanted was to set up a strong tribunal which was to report to this House, and was to have the same authority, and even more authority than that possessed at present by the Committee upstairs. But now we find that it is proposed to establish a Court of Appeal from the decision of this new Commission, and it will be quite possible, if the decision of the local inquiry is not satisfactory, for all the witnesses to be brought up to London and to be again examined here.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! I must remind the hon. Member that he is now discussing the Bill generally, whereas the question before the House is as to the form of the tribunal.

MR. ARTHUR ELLIOT: I feel that I was going a little wide of the mark.

Mr. Arthur Elliot.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: We are making no change in respect of the power of appeal.

MR. ARTHUR ELLIOT: I think there is a considerable difference being made. My objection is to your giving an appeal from a Parliamentary inquiry to a Parliamentary Committee upstairs. If these proposals had been made in the Bill originally, I confess that I should have let the measure alone. But we have to deal with things as we find them. I must confess that the right hon. Gentleman has taken all taste for the Bill out of my mouth, and has robbed me of a good deal of the pleasure with which I contemplated it. I do not think that in its new form it is calculated to give general satisfaction.

DR. CLARK (Caithness): I very much regret that we only had laid before us the terms of this new clause this morning. We certainly ought to have had more time to consider it. I am afraid that the Chairmen of the Selection Committees will never have the power it is proposed to give them of appointing Members of this House on the Commission. I further object to the proposal for filling up casual vacancies. The power of filling up these vacancies is to be taken away from the Chairmen and given to the Secretary of State for Scotland, and our contention is that the Chairmen, and not the Secretary for Scotland, should have this power. I certainly cannot understand why these changes have been made, and I am astonished that my right hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition has not seen their importance, and has not realised that they are entirely contrary to the principle of the agreement at which we arrived when the Bill was in Committee.

MR. CRIPPS (Gloucestershire, Stroud): I am heartily in accord with the proposals of the Lord Advocate, because the changes which have been made really bring the Members of this House into greater prominence than they were under the original scheme. I support the clause for three reasons—first, that without some such clause the Bill would never have been workable. It is absolutely essential that a private panel should be formed from which the Chairmen may make their selection. In the second place, I am very glad that the Secretary of State for

Scotland is only brought in in order to fill casual vacancies. I think it is right that he should have power of that kind, as it might possibly occur that the whole proceedings of the Commission would be stopped because of the inconvenience of communicating with the Chairman of the Committee of Selection in the event of an emergency. Thirdly, I have always objected to putting a procedure of this or the other House under Statutory obligations. I think each House should be at liberty to deal with its procedure in its own way. That is the true constitutional principle, and it has always been acted upon in the past. I heartily congratulate the Lord Advocate on having recognised and given effect to this doctrine, and I therefore give his proposal my cordial support.

MR. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): I somewhat disagree with the hon. Gentleman, the last speaker. I do not think he attached sufficient importance to the question of filling up casual vacancies. I think it is important that the Secretary for Scotland should be removed as far as possible from this Bill, and I certainly do object to the provision that any vacancy that may occur on the Commission shall be filled up from the extra Parliamentary panel. I hope the Lord Advocate will see his way to alter that arrangement.

MR. COLVILLE (Lanark, N.E.): I also hope that some arrangement will be made by which vacancies will be filled up from the Parliamentary panel. I think that the Commission should be composed exclusively of Members of Parliament, and I trust that the Lord Advocate will do his best to secure that end.

Question put, and agreed to.

SIR CHARLES CAMERON: I beg to move an Amendment to this new clause of the Lord Advocate's, in order that the Commissioners may be, as nearly as possible, alternately Members of the House of Lords and Members of the House of Commons.

Amendment proposed to the proposed Clause—

"In line 6, after the word 'Commissioners,' to insert the words, 'being alternately, or as nearly as may be alternately, a Member of the House of Lords and a Member of the House of Commons.'"—(Sir Charles Cameron.)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I really think this is unnecessary. The hon. Member will remember that the two selecting persons are the Chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means in this House, and the Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords, and it would be extremely unlikely that the claims of either House would be disregarded. It seems to be almost ludicrous to suggest such an Amendment as this. I should have thought it would become a question of choosing the man with the most experience. I do not think there is the slightest chance of there being a run, so to speak, on either House, and in my opinion it is almost degrading to suggest it.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I am also disposed to believe that no unfairness would be exercised by the selecting persons, but at the same time there is a little ambiguity about the word "alternately." Two or three of these tribunals might be appointed at the same time, and they are not to be appointed in sequence, and I do not see, then, how they could be alternative. I think we had better leave it to the good sense of the Chairmen of the Committees.

SIR CHARLES CAMERON: I do not press the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

SIR CHARLES CAMERON: There is another Amendment which I beg to move upon this new clause. The Lord Advocate has said all along that these tribunals should be, as much as possible, taken out of the hands of the Secretary of Scotland, and left with the Chairmen of Committees; but the proposal here is that if a vacancy occurs the Secretary for Scotland should fill it up from the extra Parliamentary panel. I propose that the Chairmen of Committees should fill up any such vacancy, not from the extra Parliamentary panel, but from the Members of this House. It is very desirable, in the interests of all parties concerned, that the selection of the tribunal should be made by persons who could have no interest in the matter. ∴

Amendment proposed to the proposed clause—

"In line 29, to leave out the words 'Secretary for Scotland,' and insert the word 'Chairmen' (*Sir Charles Cameron*)—instead thereof."

Question proposed—"That the words 'Secretary for Scotland' stand part of the proposed clause."

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I do not know whether the hon. Member's memory carries him back to the Committee stage; if it does, he will recollect that he made a speech diametrically opposed to his present remarks. He then thought that the Secretary for Scotland should select from the Parliamentary panel. This power now comes in only in case of a casual vacancy at the last moment, after the date of the inquiry has been fixed. If the vacancy occurs before that, it would, of course, be filled up by the Chairmen; but after the date of the inquiry despatch is essential, and then the Secretary for Scotland should act, because he is responsible for the carrying out of the Provisional Order. I am perfectly willing to meet hon. Members by allowing members to be selected from any of the panels; but if I do so, it must be understood that it shall not be taken as a test of bad faith if the Secretary for Scotland should select from the extra Parliamentary panel, because I intend that he shall take the man who is ready to his hand.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause amended—

"In line 29, by leaving out the words 'the extra Parliamentary panel,' and inserting the words 'any of the panels.'—(*The Lord Advocate*)—instead thereof."

Clause, as amended, added.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanark, Mid): This Amendment is one of a series, and the object of it is that the Chairman should decide, before the meeting of Parliament, when notice is given in November, whether a Bill shall be proceeded with under the Scotch Procedure or as a Private Bill. The result of this Bill is that you have practically two different systems of notices. But you get rid of all complication if you determine in the first place whether a Bill is to proceed as a Scotch Bill or as a Parliamentary Bill.

If it is to proceed as a Parliamentary Bill the notices must be given in accordance with the Standing Orders of this House. If, on the other hand, the Bill is to proceed under the Scotch Private Legislation Procedure, let the notices be given under that procedure. It would facilitate matters very much to have this distinct procedure, because it would give more room for cheapness of procedure. Whilst my Amendment is practically to leave out the sub-section, it is afterwards put in as applicable to Scotch Procedure; and then I have a subsequent Amendment in the case of Bills which must proceed by Order in this House. That makes the whole procedure uniform so far as regards any Bill which, ultimately, must come to this House.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 20, to leave out Sub-section (3) of Clause 1."—(*Mr. Caldwell*.)

Question proposed, "That the words of the sub-section, to the word 'give,' in line 21, stand part of the Bill."

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I will put before the House just what we wanted, and explain what the difficulties of the situation are. We all feel that under the present procedure there is a great deal of unnecessary expense in the matter of notices and advertisements, and we were very anxious in the new procedure to remedy that if possible. Also, if the Chairman decided that a proposal should proceed by Private Bill instead of by Provisional Order, we wanted that whatever steps had been taken should not be wasted. Keeping those objects in view, there were obviously only two ways of proceeding. One is the method proposed by the hon. Member opposite, and the other is that proposed by the Amendment which stands in my name. The idea of the hon. Member for Lanark is a very good one so far as it goes. He says:—

"Let the Chairman decide this question, and after he has decided let the procedure be either the modified notice for a Provisional Order or the other notice for a Bill."

The difficulty about that is this, that it is almost impossible for the Chairman to decide unless he has some sort of notice to begin with. He must, in deciding these questions, give some heed to such representation as may be addressed to him by

opponents to the Bill. But opponents can hardly make their representations unless there has been some notice. Obviously the question of time is also of great moment. The other plan is what may be called a modified form of notice, which would do everything necessary to begin with. If the Chairman then decided that a Provisional Order is to be the method of procedure, all that is necessary will have been done. If, on the other hand, it is decided the matter must proceed by Private Bill, let what has been done be available; but, of course, leave it to the House to prescribe by Standing Order what more they want done. I certainly think the latter is the better plan.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Other Amendments made.

Another Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, line 16, after the word 'Order,' to insert the words 'or relate to any matter which had already been refused by the Secretary for Scotland in any previous application for a Provisional Order under this Act.'"—(*Sir Charles Cameron.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I am afraid I could not accept this Amendment. In the first place, it would be one that would be very difficult to bring to the test—"or relate to any matter which had already been refused." That is rather a difficult question sometimes to determine, and it would really open the door to getting out of the provisions of the Act altogether. If the Secretary for Scotland was impervious, and was refusing everything, I think the way would not be altogether blocked, because that would be quite a proper matter to bring before the Chairmen on the next occasion, with a view to influencing their decision as to whether it should be by Private Bill or not.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

MR. CRIPPS: The House will remember that there was a Division on this point in the Committee stage. This Sub-section 5 is not necessary as regards the procedure, because it is safeguarded by the word "shall" in Sub-section 1, Section 1. It is not possible to foresee what

possible conditions may arise in the future. I do not want at this stage to start a prolonged discussion, because it was discussed on the Committee stage; but I should like the Lord Advocate to explain how it is that, after the promise was made that this constitutional point should be considered, no steps have been taken. I should like the Lord Advocate to explain why he wishes to retain this sub-section.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, line 29, to leave out Sub-section (5) of Clause 2."—(*Mr. Cripps.*)

Question proposed, "That Sub-section (5) of Clause 2, stand part of the Bill."

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I confess that the matter has been really overlooked; but if the hon. and learned Member will be content with another promise, I will see what can be done to meet the case.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

DR. CLARK: An inquiry may be required, or may not be required. If it is not required, there is no need to send it up; but if is required, then it can be carried on. I beg to move.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 3, line 26, to leave out the word 'shall,' and insert the word 'may.'"—(*Dr. Clark.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'shall,' stand part of the clause."

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I accept this Amendment.

Amendment agreed to.

SIR CHARLES CAMERON: I think that if the Commissioners and the opposing parties desire to hold the inquiry elsewhere, it is only reasonable that their wishes should be respected. I beg to move.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 4, line 17, after the word 'relate,' to insert the words, 'or they may hold such inquiry elsewhere as the Commissioners may, with the consent of the parties promoting and opposing the Order, fix.'"—(*Sir Charles Cameron.*)

Question proposed—"That those words be there inserted."

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I think if the hon. Baronet will look carefully at the clause, he will see that it has been carefully framed to guard against the difficulty he has raised. Of course, the holding of these inquiries will be regulated by common sense.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Other Amendments made.

SIR CHARLES CAMERON: The object of this Amendment is to meet a case in which a condition may be attached to the issue of an Order to which neither the promoters nor the opponents agree, and in such a case it is proposed to allow an appeal.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 5, line 34, after the word 'held,' to insert the words '(c) or Amendments have been made on the Order since it was originally submitted.'"—(*Sir Charles Cameron.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: This Amendment introduces what I may call an absolutely cross division. Under Clause 7, where there is no opposition, or where the opposition has been withdrawn before inquiry held, then the Secretary for Scotland issues the Order. Of course, if there has been no inquiry, all the Secretary for Scotland has to go on is the Order as it is put before him. Under Clause 8, although there may be no opposition, the matter may be thought of sufficient importance to have an inquiry, and the Secretary for Scotland shall refuse to issue a Provisional Order if the Commissioners report that the Orders should not be made. He is therefore bound by the result of the inquiry. The Amendment, however, introduces a new consideration altogether, and would make the section unreadable. Where we have divisions of this kind we must work them out on the lines of the division.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Other Amendments made.

SIR CHARLES CAMERON: Unless some such provision as this Amendment is inserted in the Bill, the Secretary for Scotland will be an absolute autocrat, and there will be no getting past any refusal on his part. He will, in fact, be a despot in matters of Private Bill legislation.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 6, line 11, after the word 'prescribed,' to insert the words, '(2a) If the Secretary for Scotland shall refuse to issue any Order under either of the two preceding sections of this Act, the promoters may, within ten clear days after the date of such refusal, present a petition to either House of Parliament, praying that the Order so refused may be referred to the Joint Committee provided for in the next succeeding section in the same way as is provided with respect to a Confirmation Bill under the said section.'"—(*Sir Charles Cameron.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: Of course, there are two positions under which the Secretary for Scotland will act. First, where there is no inquiry and no opposition, and I think I have already dealt practically with that. But really that is not the important case. Second, when the Commissioners report against the Order. This Amendment would give an absolute right of appeal to Parliament, and that is entirely against our Parliamentary traditions in such matters. If a person loses his Bill before a Committee of the House of Commons at the present moment, he has not the right to appeal to the House of Lords, but has to wait for another year and then start again, and we propose that that should continue. I would remind the hon. Member that the very fact that we have now a tribunal practically consisting of Members of Parliament is an additional reason why the Amendment cannot be accepted. I think the House will see that it would be an innovation on our present practice which is not needed in the Bill.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

MR. THOMAS SHAW (*Hawick Burghs*): I think it will be necessary for me to trouble the House with a Division on this Amendment, because it goes to the root of the question as to

whether the Bill, as framed, will in its operation be successful or not. The blot on the Bill as it now stands is undoubtedly Section 9. After the elaborate provisions in the first eight sections for an inquiry on the spot as to the merits or demerits of a Provisional Order, we find there comes a section for subsequent procedure in Parliament, and we ask ourselves the question, What was the use of all our attempts to save expense and to simplify procedure in the preceding sections? It seems to me that if Clause 9 remains in the Bill, we might have saved all our time and trouble in enacting this measure. I would call the attention of the House to the fact that, while I am proposing a certain Amendment as an addition to Sub-section 3 of Clause 8, it is really a substitution for Section 9, regarding which I have a further Amendment to delete it altogether. I come now to the precautions already taken in the Bill now before us. The new system which is to be introduced has a variety of conditions and restrictions. In the first place, it applies to Bills which are mainly or wholly Scotch; in the second place, there are to be excluded from the advantages of the measure all cases except those which are small and relatively unimportant; and in the third place, it is expressly provided in the Bill that no Provisional Order with the advantage of this procedure can be carried through the House if there is any question of public policy involved. With all these conditions and restrictions we ask ourselves, What more can anyone desire to make it quite clear that the measure is only applicable to what I might call relatively trivial and unimportant Scotch Private Bills. Parliament itself has, in the previous sections, sufficiently asserted its power to deal even with these matters by providing for an inquiry on the spot in which both Houses shall be represented. I would call the attention of the House to the following express provision in Section 6, Sub-section (3): "Commissioners may hear and decide upon the preamble before discussing clauses." What I want to put to the House is this. If you have a local inquiry by a Parliamentary tribunal which shall pass the preamble of the Bill and discuss its clauses, and which will frame suggestions and Amendments ultimately to be adopted by this House, what more does anyone want

in the shape of an inquiry? Surely the Government will take this view into consideration. Supposing the Bill had practically concluded at Section 8, and supposing we had proposed an equivalent to Section 9, and had said that, notwithstanding all that was done in the first eight clauses, yet there should be an elaborate subsequent procedure in Parliament, and that an Order which had already been inquired into on the spot should be referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament, and that the opponent should, subject to the practice of Parliament, be allowed to appear and oppose by himself, his counsel, agent and witnesses—I wonder what the Government would have thought. That is the view I take, from whatever quarter this clause has originated. I say that Section 9 is a provision under which the real object of the Bill is to be completely undone and obliterated, because the most obstinate and fastidious and overbearing opponent has all that he can desire or deserve under the Parliamentary procedure up to Section 8. Therefore, what I propose is to substitute for Section 9, that there shall be power to bring in at once a Confirmation Bill, but with a reserve power to either House of Parliament, when the Bill stands as an Order of the Day, to refer the Bill back to the Commissioners for further inquiry and report, either generally or with special instructions. Now, a good deal has been said in regard to reserving the powers of Parliament. I ask if this is not sufficient reservation of the powers of Parliament. First, Parliament may visit the spot and make inquiry; and, second, when the Bill returns here it may be thrown out on the Third Reading, or when any new point has emerged, Parliament may refer that point back to its own Commissioners for further inquiry and report. There are only two objections which can be made to the proposal I now venture to make. The first is, that the Government is committed by precedent; and the second, that the opinion of Scotland is in favour of this wrecking proposal or scheme in Clause 9. In regard to precedents it is wholly wrong. I may frankly tell the House that I have framed the language of the Amendment from the language of the Bills of 1891 and 1892, introduced by the Unionist Government of that day, in which this

very provision for the re-remit upon a particular point was reserved. And it was emphatically declared by these Bills that there should be no power to remit to a Select Committee of either House or a Joint Committee of both Houses. I say that instead of the Government sheltering themselves under precedents, I am sheltering myself under precedents formed by the Government themselves or their predecessors in title in 1891 and 1892. The further question is: "Does Scotland want this wrecking proposal?" Scotland has not had very much time to consider it, but we have two very important pieces of evidence as to the feeling of Scotland, which we can bring before the House. The first is, that the best friends which this measure ever had—the Convention of Royal and Parliamentary Burghs—seems rather aghast at the idea that Section 9 is to be enacted by Parliament. In a memorandum which the Convention has been good enough to furnish to the Members of the House it is said:

"Probably, too, since Parliament clearly means fairly to try how Local Inquiry and Report would work, as coming in the place of the present Private Bill Committee's Inquiry and Report, the Bill will emerge shorn of Clauses 8 and 9, and containing only the provision for a public Confirming Bill, to be held on introduction as at the Report stage, and requiring only a formal rendering in all cases of Provisional Orders, whether these have been opposed or unopposed."

I had not seen that when I framed my Amendment. I have shown that the Convention of Royal and Parliamentary Burghs is in favour of my Amendment, and that it follows the precedents made by the predecessors of the Government themselves. But the Convention of Royal and Parliamentary Burghs has not stopped there. It has petitioned this House, and in that petition, which was presented by the hon. Member for South Edinburgh, it is said:

"Your Petitioners are of opinion that the privilege conferred on opponents by that Section (9) should not be given, as in opposed measures it virtually deprives the public of the benefits which it is the object of the present Bill to confer."

I do not want to refer to Section 9 in any stronger language than is here employed. I do not shut my eyes to the fact that there is a representation of Scotland in this House. I have already raised this identical question in the House, and I ask

Mr. Thomas Shaw.

the impartial consideration of the House of Commons to the result. We had a Division substantially on this question, and we had in favour of Her Majesty's Government's wrecking proposal, thirteen Unionist Scotch Members, while we had against it 25 Liberal Scotch Members and 6 Unionist Scotch Members—in all, 13 against my proposal and 31 representatives in favour of it. Now, I am bound to say that we have had just a little too much this Session already of suffering from adverse decisions on purely Scotch questions. On a non-party question of this kind, why will not Her Majesty's Government allow the Scotch Members to have some say in the government of their own country? And I do not for the life of me see why Her Majesty's Government should be so obstinate in a matter which is going to make the Bill positively ridiculous and useless. We have got to the fact that Parliament is going to the spot to make inquiry and to report, and why then should there be brought in afterwards all the paraphernalia of an opposed Bill before the two Houses of Parliament, with counsel and agents and no end of a plethora of expense involved before a Select Committee or a Joint Committee of both Houses? Every man who wishes well to this scheme of reform will support this Amendment, and I know that every man who wishes to hamper that scheme and make it absolutely useless for the purpose it is designed to serve will oppose the Amendment. I wish Clause 9 to go out of the Bill, and that the local inquiry should be first and final; and in order to do that, I call on all hon. Members of the House to support the Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 6, line 15, after the word 'and,' to insert the words, 'said Bill after introduction shall be deemed to have passed through all its stages up to and including Committee, and shall be ordered to be considered in either House as if reported from a Committee.'

"(4) Either House may, when the Bill stands as an Order of the Day, refer the Bill back to the Commissioners for further inquiry and report, either generally or with special instructions, but shall not be entitled to refer the Bill to a Select Committee or a Joint Committee of the two Houses."—(*Mr. Thomas Shaw.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. CRIPPS: The Amendment of the hon. and learned Member would really alter the whole framework of the Bill as introduced. He has stated that Clause 9, which has been part of the Bill from the commencement, would render the whole of the Bill useless. But before I go into the merits of that, I should like to refer to another statement of the hon. and learned Member. He seems to think that only Scotch Members have an interest in this Bill. I deny that altogether, and it has been denied over and over again in the course of the Debate. What we are dealing with here is the right method of dealing with Private Bill legislation, and almost every Member has admitted that we ought to see whether the scheme is in itself a good scheme, not only in regard to Scotland, but a scheme which will fit any devolution that may be made of the powers of Parliament to other parts of the United Kingdom. From that point of view every Member of this House may, and ought, to express his opinion, and give the weight of his opinion, if there is any Division, on any subject connected with it. There is another point on which I differ from the hon. and learned Gentleman. He talks about precedents; but I question whether he can really say that a Bill formerly before the House is a precedent in the way he used the term. I say that you cannot have any precedent in regard to legislation unless the Bill has been actually passed into law.

MR. THOMAS SHAW: The Bills I cited were the Bills which a Unionist Government introduced as expressing their views.

MR. CRIPPS: I maintain that no one can suggest that any proposal in a Bill which does not get beyond the Bill stage is a precedent at all. It may be valuable as exhibiting the opinion of a certain Government or of the hon. Member who introduced it, but it is not a legislative precedent. Besides, matters are not to be decided merely by questions of precedent. We undoubtedly entertain new principles from time to time. This Provisional Order system, in one form or other, is not new; and at the present time there is an appeal both to a Committee of this House and to a Committee of the House of Lords. I totally disagree

with the hon. and learned Member that it is in accordance with experience that you get a large number of appeals in regard to Provisional Orders of this class. It is comparatively seldom that you get a point of sufficient importance to make it a matter of appeal either before this House or a Committee of the House of Lords. But why should it always be thought necessary to have appeals of this character? With matters of large pecuniary interest to be settled, it is most necessary, to ensure against the miscarriage of justice, that you should in certain cases give the right of appeal. I recollect the right hon. Gentleman, the Member for West Monmouth, who discussed these matters very much in the past year, always pointing out the necessity of some appeal of this kind; and here you put the appeal in a form which will cause the least expense to the suitor, and at the same time guarantee the best possible tribunal when the appeal comes to be heard. I am sure the hon. and learned Gentleman will not say, if he has had experience of these local inquiries, which, after all, are held in a rough-and-ready manner, that where you may have very important issues involved, you ought to have no power for their reconsideration. That would be contrary to the experience of everyone who has dealt with questions of this character. It is carrying the idea of economy too far, unless you can ensure the administration of justice. Although, of course, everyone wants all judicial inquiries of this kind to be as economical as possible, you must not sacrifice the interests of justice to the interests of economy. When there are important issues, you must have some tribunal where they can be ultimately discussed after the true issue between the parties is thoroughly understood and appreciated. We have an illustration of that in the practice of this House in regard to other legislation. It sometimes transpires, when matters reach the Report stage, that they have been insufficiently considered in the Committee stage, and require further consideration. I must say that I hope the Government will not at the last moment alter what really is the framework of the Bill. I hope they will preserve this right. It is necessary, to my mind, in the first instance, in order to ensure a proper system under which justice can be done in what may be a complicated inquiry;

and, secondly, in order that this House may have a reasonable and just control over all the more important questions with reference to which objections have been made. On these two grounds I hope the Lord Advocate will retain his position.

MR. HEDDERWICK (Wick Burghs): I regard this point as one of the utmost importance. I am perfectly satisfied that if this clause is retained the measure will be almost rendered nugatory. As far as I understand the desire on the part of my fellow-countrymen for a measure such as this, it was founded upon certain definite grounds. One was, that Scotch matters, in the nature of private Bills, should be settled by the local decision as far as possible in Scotland; in the next place, that that settlement should be achieved with despatch; and, in the third place, that it should be accompanied with as great a saving of expense as possible. Now, the hon. and learned Member for the Stroud Division seems to labour under the hallucination that we object altogether to the great interest which he has shown in this Amendment. I do not think that that is the case. I think we have been very grateful to the hon. and learned Gentleman for the experience and the amount of light that he has cast upon the whole subject. Nor do we object to the expression of opinion which has been heard very freely, I confess, upon this measure, which really, however, concerns Scotland alone. If I may, without offence, say so, I think the hon. and learned Member for the Stroud Division seems to be under the misapprehension that if this clause is withdrawn, the whole of the Parliamentary control which would be left in this Bill would be purely nominal. So far from that being the case, under the Bill as it now stands the whole of these proceedings are, in the first place, to be before the Commissioners, who are to be appointed by the Chairman of this House and the Chairman of the House of Lords; and when these Commissioners have done their work, no Order under the Secretary of State is to be of any validity at all until it has been confirmed by Parliament and become what is known and referred to in the Bill as a Confirmation Bill. But what the Lord Advocate now proposes is that when the Confirmation Bill is intro-

duced if anyone chooses to present a petition seven days before the Second Reading, all that has taken place in Scotland under those selected Members of the House of Commons and the House of Lords is to become absolutely of no effect, and the whole of the proceedings are to be rendered absolutely nugatory. And, more than that, the Joint Committee before whom the proceedings are then to come are to have a new power, namely, a power of loading one or other of the parties, as they may think fit, with the whole of the cost, from the initiation of the proceedings. That, I think, is a very serious consideration. If the object of the Lord Advocate is to satisfy the genuine and honest desire on the part of the people of Scotland to have such matters as would come before the House under existing circumstances, in a private Bill, decided locally, after a competent inquiry, before two selected Members of this House, and to have that done with despatch and at small cost, then I say, this Section 9, if it is to remain, will be absolutely fatal. But why should the hon. and learned Member suppose that the Amendment of my hon. and learned friend proposes that the control should not be left in the hands of this House? What is the Amendment which my hon. and learned friend proposes to substitute? After the Commissioners inquiring into the matter in the locality have made their report, and after the Order which the Secretary for Scotland has to lay upon the Table of this House has, in due course, become a Confirmation Bill, the House, if it were to exclude the Amendment of my hon. and learned friend, would then be able, if it thought fit, to send back that Bill to the Commission from whom the Report emanated, with instructions for a further report, or with instructions for further information upon any point which this House thought necessary or desirable. What more does the hon. and learned Member for the Stroud Division desire? Does he desire at one and the same time, in one and the same measure, to give to Scotland the pretence of deciding upon its own affairs, and then, after the cost of the inquiry has been incurred, — a cost which, I am afraid, will be by no means small; probably very much more than the promoters of this Bill anticipate — that it shall be rendered of no effect, but that the matter shall be inquired into and gone over before a Joint Committee

Mr. Cripps.

of this House, as if no local inquiry had ever taken place before? I must say that this matter seems to me to be more absurd when you consider the number of Orders that are likely to be applied for. I understand that the average number of Bills from Scotland that come before the Committees is something like twenty-two yearly, and out of those twenty-two one might, I think, very fairly say that there is not one which does not involve property of very great value. But if these twenty-two Bills are of great value, and if we are to take the Provisional Orders that are likely to approximate to that number, or even exceed it, how absurd it would be to suppose that any one of the parties to the application for a Provisional Order would rest satisfied with the decision, no matter how fair or how just it might be, arrived at by the Commissioners appointed by the Chairmen of the two Houses of Parliament, when he was aware that the whole matter would be tried again before a Joint Committee of this House? I venture to think that there is scarcely an opposed Bill at the present moment which, if it came before the new tribunal which the learned Lord Advocate is about to set up, and if it were defeated, would not again be brought before the Joint Committee on the chance of getting the decision of the court repealed. I am confident that if this section is retained it will not only have a nugatory effect, but will create a feeling of great dissatisfaction throughout Scotland. In illustration of that, I think the paragraph which has been quoted by my hon. and learned friend, coming from so well-known and so representative a body as the Royal Convention of Burghs in Scotland, is the best evidence that could be obtained of the measure of approbation that is likely to be meted out to this particular section.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I do not know that I have really anything to add to what I stated on this matter in Committee. I gave the reasons then which made it impossible for me to withdraw this clause, and I have not heard of anything since to make me change my position. But I am bound to say that in the hon. and learned Gentleman's speech he used words which I must say were either somewhat exaggerated, or show his soul to be filled with dismal foreboding as to the effect of the clause. He spoke

of this clause as a "wrecking clause." That phrase would lead one to think that it referred to something new that had been sprung upon the House. But that is not the case. On the contrary, this clause has been in the Bill since the very beginning, and it was also in the Bill of last year. The hon. Gentleman also said that Scotland has had little time to consider it. Scotland has enjoyed two years in which to consider it, in addition to which the existence of this clause was made a great matter of argument during the Second Reading discussion. The hon. Member for Wick said that hon. Members were really afraid that the result of this clause would be to render the whole matter nugatory. Hon. Members will please remember that at this moment, under the Provisional Order system, any opponent who thinks that his interests are damaged by the Provisional Order has the chance of coming to Parliament and taking the opinion, not only of one House, but of both Houses. How has that been taken advantage of? We have the figures of 1888 to 1897 inclusive. During that time there were 1,980 Provisional Orders dealt with, only 75 of which were brought by way of appeal to Parliament. Now, 75 is something less than 4 per cent., and what was the fate of the 75? Of this number the decision of the original tribunal was confirmed in every case except seven, or less than '04 per cent. Apply this percentage to the figures which the hon. Member for Wick gave. He said that on an average there are 22 private Scotch Bills a year. If the experience of the future, however, is the experience of the past, what will happen to the 22 Bills is that there will be one appeal a year, and only every four years will one appeal be successful. Under this Bill the Government propose to give the Joint Committee a power of awarding costs by a majority. The reason of that is to check anything like undue appealing. I should be going back on the pledges given to the other sections of the House, and going against the right of individuals to secure justice, if I yielded on this question. I have treated the matter all through as a Parliamentary, and not as a Scotch question.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The right hon. Gentleman has referred to the fact that this matter was very fully discussed in Committee, and those hon.

Members who take an interest in it at all have no doubt said all that there is to be said for and against the Amendment of my hon. and learned friend. But there is one argument which has arisen since the Debate in Committee which deserves a little consideration. I was astonished to hear the right hon. Gentleman put that aside on the ground that it was a time-honoured argument. I should have thought that a time-honoured argument would have had all the greater weight; but that argument, obscure and perhaps useless according to the view of the right hon. Gentleman, is the decisive expression of opinion of the Scotch representatives in the Division on this matter, the proportion being 13 to 31, and a great many going out, in the manner with which we are so familiar, because they could not get their own way, but did not like to vote against a Member of the Government for whom they have such very high respect as the right hon. Gentleman opposite. We none of us like voting against him, but we have to do it sometimes. My hon. and learned friend the Member for Stroud referred to this as being a Scotch question, and said that he did not wish to look at it from a Scotch point of view. I quite understand that; but let me say that we have welcomed all through the discussion of the Bill the right of the hon. and learned Gentleman to take the part he has in the discussion, because, although we have often been obliged to take an opposite side on some Amendments, we all recognise his great knowledge of the subject and the great desire he has shown to make this a thoroughly practicable and useful measure, and we appreciate the benefit of his assistance in maintaining from first to last the authority and competence of Parliament in this matter. But although that is true, and although it is natural that the hon. and learned Gentleman should consider rather the larger question of Parliamentary expediency, we have to consider the Scotch aspect of this question, namely, the desire to have a thorough local inquiry into these contentious proposals. Well, how in the world, if your object is to make that local inquiry as good and as effective as possible, can you think that you assist that object in saying that the inquiry and all its results shall be subject to be overruled by a Committee here? The Lord Advocate spoke of the existing and past system of Provisional Orders, and to the

fact that there have been few appeals in the cases of these Provisional Orders; and my hon. and learned friend the Member for Stroud spoke of these local inquiries as being inquiries of a rough-and-ready kind. The local inquiry under the Provisional Order system was undoubtedly an inquiry which might deserve that name; but here we are going to set up a great constitutional tribunal, and to import to Scotland Members of the House of Commons and Peers from another place in order to give dignity, as well as stability, to the tribunal which we are setting up. That cannot be a rough-and-ready inquiry. It will be as thorough and complete an inquiry as was ever held in any of the Committee-rooms upstairs. And then, having had this joint Committee of the two Houses going down to Scotland, you are going to have another joint Committee of the two Houses to review all that has been done. I cannot understand the pertinacity with which the Government adhere to this proposal. We must consider the effect of this upon the attitude of the Members and Peers who are to go to Scotland to conduct the local inquiries. I am sanguine that they will be glad to go. If they consider their own health and pleasure they will go, but in any case I think there will be little difficulty in filling this tribunal from the two Houses of Parliament. But if they are to go down for the mere purpose of having their work done over again, and their decisions reversed by another Committee in London, they will say, "No, if I am to do this thing I will do it up here in my own way. I will wait until it comes to me instead of going down to it." There would be less disposition to go to Scotland than if this new tribunal had the duty upon it of ultimately deciding the matters submitted to them, subject, of course, to the general review of Parliament in the two Houses. I am surprised that the Lord Advocate should be so stubborn, because he has been so reasonably and pleasantly plastic on some other matters of importance, and there is an unmistakable verdict in favour of this Amendment of 31 to 13, which are figures which we must never forget in connection with this matter. These figures are a clear indication of the opinion of Scotch Members on both sides of the House, because this is not a Party question. The Lord Advocate pointed out how few of

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.

these Bills would come up, and said there would be little or nothing for the Committee to do. Therefore, we are to set up this Committee in order that it may do nothing! It seems such a novel argument to use. But the right hon. Gentleman is so persistent in his adherence to the proposal in the Bill, that there is nothing left to do—after a few more fervid Scotch Members have discharged their emotion on the subject—but to repeat and, if possible, better the 31 to 13.

SIR MARK STEWART (Kirkcudbright): There are two reasons for bringing forward this Bill, to my mind. One is the development of railways to a larger extent than has hitherto been found to be expedient in Scotland; and the other to avoid the great expense of coming up to Parliament to obtain the Acts of Parliament necessary for the making of new railways. I am satisfied, from my own experience, and from what I know of the opinion of Scotland on the subject, that this Bill is weakened and marred by the ninth clause. You cannot develop railways in these districts if you are opposed by the wealthy landowners, and though you may be successful at the local tribunal, you have another tribunal to face at Westminster, and that fact will deter many promoters from endeavouring to extend the railway system. I much regret that the Government have not given way in this matter, as the purpose for which this Bill is wanted is to save expense.

MR. R. WALLACE (Perth): The hon. Member for Stroud is asking the House to reject this Amendment, upon the ground that it alters entirely the framework of the original Bill, but the hon. and learned Gentleman has forgotten that the Bill we are now dealing with is not the Bill which received a Second Reading in this House—it has been entirely altered in its character. This clause was necessary in the original Bill for the purpose of preserving the control of Parliament, because the local inquiry was to be conducted by Commissioners outside of this House. Now, the proposal is that the inquiry is to be conducted by a Joint Committee of the two Houses, which is to go down to Scotland for that purpose. In the original Bill the inquiry was to be held by an outside Committee. Now it is proposed to do a thing which has never been done

before, and that is to have an appeal from a Joint Committee of the two Houses sitting in Scotland to a joint Committee of the two Houses sitting in London. That is a great disappointment to Scotland. We believe if that is allowed the Bill will be deprived of its chief recommendation. Instead of cheapening proceedings, this will add to it expense. Money having been spent in Scotland to begin with, this simply drags the promoters up to London to spend more. I earnestly urge, in order that this Bill shall be a great success, and that it may enable the people of Scotland to promote schemes for the benefit of the country, that he will reconsider the determination he has come to and accept this Amendment in some form.

MR. STUART WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam): I think we ought to adhere to the provisions of the Bill, because Parliament must have the right ultimately to say whether a Provisional Order shall become law or not. It is only going to be asked to say so in opposed cases. If this Amendment is passed, opposed Orders could only be dealt with on the Report stage or upon Third Reading. On these stages the representatives of the promoters on the one hand, and of the opponents on the other hand, will make statements absolutely contradictory to one another, the relative value of which the House will be totally unable to try; and in cases of that kind the House ought to be able to refer the matter to a Committee upstairs. It may be said that the Joint Committee should have the power of sitting locally. Well, for my part, I do not see that it should necessarily sit at Westminster; but for the purpose of trying cases where the facts are in dispute, I certainly think we ought to have the power of ordering the Committee to hold a second inquiry.

MR. CROMBIE: The difference between the contention of the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down and the Amendment is infinitesimal. The reason why we Scotch Members wish this clause to be taken out is solely that of expense. That, indeed, is the sole *raison d'être* of the Bill. There is no objection to the present procedure except on the ground of cost. If it was not for the expense, we should not be here considering this

Bill. The paramount argument is that if it is an expensive procedure then it is a wrong one. The whole question is a very small one, and I hope when the Lord Advocate comes to reconsider the matter he will adopt a more conciliatory attitude upon this particular Amendment.

MR. JOHN WILSON (Falkirk Burghs): Many of us would like to see this Bill carried through, and I, as a supporter of the Government, am sorry to see the Lord Advocate so stiff-necked on this Amendment. I should like to urge upon him the opinion of Scotland with regard to this matter. The whole idea is to save expense, and we are going by this clause to increase the expense. I shall be bound to vote against the Government in this matter, and I believe I am voicing the opinion of many Scotch Unionist Members in supporting this Amendment. If there is to be a local inquiry and a second one at Westminster, the expense will be greater than ever, and I appeal to the Lord Advocate to reconsider his attitude.

MR. J. P. SMITH (Lanark, Partick): I hope the Government will adhere to the line which they have taken up. The Lord Advocate is on sound ground when he shows how this clause is likely to be used. Our principle has always been to have a chance of appeal, but my hon. friend talks as if it were an appeal from one Committee to another. I cannot see the difference between an appeal to a Joint Committee, and an appeal to a Committee of the House of Lords and Commons. I think the Government are perfectly right in the stand they have taken.

DR. CLARK: I should like to know whether the Government are willing to accept any compromise on this subject.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I have gone as far as I can upon the matter, and cannot accept any compromise.

MR. C. M. DOUGLAS (Lanark, N.W.): I think the argument of the hon. Member for Partick is tantamount to a defence of the present system of Private Bill procedure. What he said in defence of the Amendment is simply that this clause is against the principle of simplicity and economy which this Bill is supposed to advance. It is not as an attack upon the Bill, but as a justification and defence of it, that we desire to omit this clause. What has been said on the subject of Provisional Orders appears to me rather to miss the very point of the purview of this Bill. The Bill is intended to deal with a class of business which is not really identical with that dealt with by Provisional Orders. The proposal in the clause is not in any true sense an appeal. The Amendment really gives an appeal in the same sense as the original clause; in either case you have a possibility of a re-committal, but in the clause as it stands you do not have that which I believe is essential, viz., a tribunal different in its character from that the decision of which is appealed against.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 114; Noes, 159. (Division List, No. 218.)

AYES.

Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, W. (Newc-under-Lyme)
Arrol, Sir William
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbert H.
Austin, M.
Bartley, George C. T.
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Begg, Ferdinand Faithfull
Billson, Alfred
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Sir C. (Glasgow)
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Carvill, Patrick G. Hamilton
Channing, Francis Allston
Clark, Dr. G. B. (Caithness-sh.)
Clough, Walter Owen
Colville, John

Corbett, A. C. (Glasgow)
Crombie, John William
Curran, Thomas (Sligo, S.)
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan (Card'g'n)
Davitt, Michael
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, Arthur
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Evans, S. T. (Glamorgan)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Flynn, James Christopher
Fowler, Rt. Hon. Sir Henry
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gourley, Sir Edw. Temperley

Harwood, George
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale
Hedderwick, Thos. Chas. H.
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Chas. H.
Hobhouse, Henry
Hogan, James Francis
Holland, Wm. H. (York, W.R.)
Horniman, Frederick John
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutton, Alfred E. (Morley)
Johnson-Ferguson, Jabez E.
Joicey, Sir James
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Lambert, George
Langley, Batty
Leese, Sir Jos. F. (Accrington)
Leng, Sir John
Lewis, John Herbert
Lyell, Sir Leonard

Mr. Crombie.

Macaleese, Daniel
 MacDonnell, Dr. M. A. (Q'n's C)
 M'Ewan, William
 McKillop, James
 M'Laren, Charles Benjamin
 M'Leod, John
 Mappin, Sir Fredk. Thorpe.
 Mencl, Sigismund Ferdinand
 Molloy, Bernard Charles
 Morley, Rt. Hn. J. (Montrose)
 Moss, Samuel
 Nicol, Donald Ninian
 Nussey, Thomas Willans
 O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)
 O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
 O'Connor, J. (Wicklow, W.)
 O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
 Oldroyd, Mark
 Palmer, Sir Charles M. (Durham)

Palmer, Geo. Wm. (Reading)
 Paulton, James Mellor
 Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
 Pickard, Benjamin
 Power, Patrick Joseph
 Price, Robert John
 Randell, David
 Richardson, J. (Durham, S.E.)
 Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
 Robertson, Edmund (Dundee)
 Robson, William (Snowdon)
 Schwann, Charles E.
 Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
 Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
 Sinclair, Capt. J. (Forfarsh.)
 Smith, Samuel (Flint)
 Stanhope, Hon. Philip J.
 Stewart, Sir M. J. M'Taggart
 Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.

Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
 Tennant, Harold John
 Thomas, David A. (Merthyr)
 Trevelyan, Charles Philips
 Wallace, Robert
 Walton, J. Lawson (Leeds, S.)
 Wedderburn, Sir William
 Weir, James Galloway
 Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
 Williams, John Carvell (Notts)
 Wilson, Charles Henry (Hull)
 Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
 Wilson, John (Falkirk)
 Wilson, John (Govan)
 Young, Samuel (Cavan, East)
 Yovall, James Henry
TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
 Mr. Herbert Gladstone and
 Mr. Munro Ferguson

NOES.

Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
 Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
 Bailey, James (Walworth)
 Baird, J. George Alexander
 Balcarres, Lord
 Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (Leeds)
 Balfour, Rt. Hn. J. B. (Clackm.)
 Banbury, Frederick George
 Barton, Dunbar Plunket
 Bathurst, Hon. Allen B.
 Beach, Lt. Hn. Sir H. M. (Bristol)
 Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
 Bethell, Commander
 Bhownagree, Sir M. M.
 Blakiston-Houston, John
 Blundell, Colonel Henry
 Roscawen, Arthur Griffith-
 Brassey, Albert
 Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
 Bullard, Sir Harry
 Butcher, John George
 Carlile, William Walter
 Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
 Cayzer, Sir Charles William
 Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
 Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Bir.)
 Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r)
 Chaplin, Right Hon. Henry
 Cochrane, Hn. Thos. H. A. E.
 Coghill, Douglas Harry
 Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
 Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
 Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
 Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
 Cornwallis, Fiennes S. W.
 Courtney, Rt. Hn. Leonard H.
 Cranborne, Viscount
 Cripps, Charles Alfred
 Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
 Cruddas, William Donaldson
 Cubitt, Hon. Henry
 Currie, Sir Donald
 Curzon, Viscount
 Dalkeith, Earl of
 Davies, Sir H. D. (Chatham)
 Doughty, George
 Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
 Doxford, William Theodore
 Drucker, A.
 Ellis, John Edward
 Fellowes, Hon. A. Edward
 Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
 Fisher, William Hayes
 Fison, Frederick William

FitzWygram, General Sir F.
 Fletcher, Sir Henry
 Foster, Harry S. (Suffolk)
 Garfit, William
 Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
 Giles, Charles Tyrrell
 Gilliat, John Saunders
 Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
 Goldsworthy, Major-General
 Gordon, Hon. John Edward
 Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
 Goschen, Rt. Hn. G. J. (St. George's)
 Goschen, George J. (Sussex)
 Gretton, John
 Gull, Sir Cameron
 Hamilton, Rt. Hn. Lord George
 Hanbury, Rt. Hn. Robert Wm.
 Heath, James
 Helder, Augustus
 Henderson, Alexander
 Hill, Arthur (Down, West)
 Hoare, Samuel (Norwich)
 Holland, Hon. Lionel R. (Bow)
 Howard, Joseph
 Howorth, Sir Henry Hoyle
 Hutton, John (Yorks. N.R.)
 Jackson, Rt. Hn. Wm. Lawies
 Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
 Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
 Jessel, Capt. Herbert Merton
 Johnston, William (Belfast)
 Jolliffe, Hon. H. George
 Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir J. H.
 Kenyon, James
 Keswick, William
 Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
 Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
 Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
 Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (L'pool)
 Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
 Loyd, Archie Kirkman
 Lucas-Shadwell, William
 Macartney, W. G. Ellison
 Macdonald, John Cumming
 Macleure, Sir John William
 M'Arthur, Charles (Liverpool)
 Maple, Sir John Blundell
 Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
 Meysey-Thompson, Sir H. M.
 Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
 Milner, Sir Frederick George
 Milton, Viscount
 Monk, Charles James
 Moore, William (Antrim, N.)

Morgan, H. F. (Monm'thsh.)
 Morrell, George Herbert
 Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford)
 Mount, William George
 Murray, Rt. Hn. A. G. (Bute)
 Murray, Chas. J. (Coventry)
 Newdigate, Francis Alex.
 O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
 Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Pollock, Harry Frederick
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Priestley, Sir W. O. (Edin.)
 Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
 Purvis, Robert
 Pym, C. Guy
 Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
 Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir M. W.
 Ritchie, Rt. Hn. C. Thomson
 Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
 Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
 Russell, Gen. F. S. (Cheltenham)
 Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
 Rutherford, John
 Sandys, Lieut.-Col. T. Myles
 Seely, Charles Hilton
 Sharpe, William Edward T.
 Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
 Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
 Smith, Jas. Parker (Lanarks.)
 Spencer, Ernest
 Stanley, Hon. A. (Ormskirk)
 Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
 Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
 Stock, James Henry
 Stone, Sir Benjamin
 Strauss, Arthur
 Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
 Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (Oxford Univ.)
 Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
 Valencia, Viscount
 Warde, Lt.-Col. C. E. (Kent)
 Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
 Williams, Jos. Powell. (Birm.)
 Willcox, Sir John Archibald
 Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
 Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (Yorks.)
 Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
 Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
 Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart-
 Young, Commander (Berks, E.)
TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
 Sir William Walrod and
 Mr. Anstruther.

MR. THOMAS SHAW: I had given notice to omit Clause 9, but I shall loyally accept the decision of the House, and not move it.

DR. CLARK: Seeing the result of the last Division, and knowing the feelings of Scotch Members on both sides of the House, perhaps the Lord Advocate will consider the permissive aspect of the case, and give the House the option of either having a second inquiry or referring it back to the Commissioners. The Government might consent to one of two things—either to give the House the option to which I have referred, or, by Statute, to permit the new Joint Committee to sit in Scotland, and by that means carry out the principle of always having a local inquiry.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 6, line 23, after the word 'orders,' to insert the words, 'and if the petition has already been considered and reported on by a Commission of two Members of each House of Parliament, either House may refer the Bill to the Commissioners.'"—(Dr. Clark.)

Question proposed,—“That those words be there inserted.”

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I think I must adhere to the Bill as it is in this respect.

DR. CLARK: As certain Standing Orders have to be drafted, and this point can be dealt with then, I will withdraw my Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 6, line 26, to leave out the word agent."—(Mr. Caldwell.)

Question proposed,—“That the word ‘agent’ stand part of the Bill.”

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I am willing to consider this point, and, if necessary, alter it afterwards.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Other Amendments made.

MR. CALDWELL: I desire to move to leave out Sub-section 3. The Lord

Advocate claimed that the object of this Bill was to protect the man with the smaller interests. But what would be his position under this Bill in the event of an appeal? The present practice is that, so far as the Committee are concerned, there must be unanimity on the question of awarding costs. If you put in here a clause that the Joint Committee by a majority may award costs, what is to become of the man with the smaller interests? It may mean ruin to him. I can perfectly well understand how the Lord Advocate may wish to discourage appeals, but he cannot have it both ways. He cannot leave in a clause like this and still say his scheme is intended for the benefit of the smaller interests in Scotland. The smaller interests, as a matter of course, would be overborne by the larger, because the larger interests would threaten the smaller that, in the event of their appealing, costs would be awarded against them. If a clause of this kind is put in, the Committee would necessarily consider that they ought to award costs. It would be said “Why did Parliament put the clause in, unless it was an indication that costs were to be awarded?” I beg to move the Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

“In page 6, line 36, to leave out Sub-section 3, of Clause 9.”—(Mr. Caldwell.)

Question proposed, “That the words ‘the Joint Committee,’ stand part of the Bill.”

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I really practically dealt with this question in the discussion just over. I am sorry I could not go so far as the hon. Members desired, but certainly part of my argument was based on the provision to give costs, and I cannot possibly accept the Amendment.

SIR CHARLES CAMERON: In the case of a Private Bill Committee, if the Committee are unanimous, costs may be awarded in the event of vexatious and unreasonable opposition. The Lord Advocate proposes to go two steps further. In the first place, he does not require unanimity on the part of the Commissioners, but a majority may award costs; and in the second place, he takes away the safeguard of “vexatious and unreasonable opposition.”

I am quite certain this section with regard to costs will deter the small objectors from coming forward. My Amendment does not go so far as that now before the House, in that it proposes to allow the Commissioners by a majority to award costs, but safeguards the proposal by requiring that they should be awarded only in the case of unreasonable or vexatious opposition. I shall, however, support the Amendment of my hon. friend.

DR. CLARK: I cannot agree with either of the Amendments of my hon. friends. As the clause stands, it really means that a three-fourths majority will be required. This clause seems to me to be one of the wise clauses in the Bill to prevent corporations who do not care about spending money from coming here and putting the smaller men to great expense. I hope the House will adopt this clause in its present form. If, after the matter has been fully threshed out at a local inquiry, anyone is going to come here and thus double and treble the cost, then they should do so with the fact before them that they may possibly have to pay the whole of the costs.

Question put and agreed to.

Other Amendments made.

MR. CALDWELL: In the case of county districts, it is generally found that it is not exactly a court of justice but simply a court of inquiry, and therefore it is advisable that these duties should be performed also by a man who occupies the position of a notary public. I hope the Lord Advocate will accept this Amendment, and I move.

Amendment proposed—

"After the words last inserted, to insert the words, 'any notary public.'"—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I do not know exactly what are the duties of a notary public, but I have heard that official described as "something a little lower than an agent." A notary public,

as a rule, has had no practical experience in courts, and I think it is necessary that we should not have persons who have not had some experience in the conducting of these inquiries.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

SIR CHARLES CAMERON: The object of my Amendment is to bring up this question for review at the end of five years. The whole thing is an experiment, and if it works satisfactorily there is no reason why the Act should not be permanent; but if it should be found unsatisfactory, it should be amended. It is intended, if the measure prove successful, to extend it to other parts of the Kingdom. I beg to move.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 9, line 34, after the word 'and,' to insert the words, 'shall remain in force until the expiration of five years from the passing thereof, and to the end of the then next Session of Parliament. It.'"—(*Sir Charles Cameron.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: The hon. Baronet will remember that I could not see my way to accept this Amendment at the Committee stage. We do not intend that this Bill shall be a temporary measure. If there is any reason at any time for an Amendment, there is no reason why an Amending Bill should not be brought in in the ordinary way. I am anxious not to give an incentive to any class of persons to make this measure work badly during the next five years, and therefore I cannot accept this Amendment.

MR. COLVILLE: I think it is very advisable that this Bill should be tried as an experiment for five years, and therefore I shall support the Amendment.

DR. CLARK: This is an important question, and we have some very important laws carried out in this way. The Irish Coercion Act is still continued in this fashion, and I think you ought to try an experiment of this kind for five or seven years, and then reconsider it. At the end of five years you would not necessarily be compelled to bring in a new Bill to amend it, but the House would then

have an opportunity of reconsidering the measure. I think you ought to try this Bill for five years. I know any Member may bring in a Bill to amend, but he cannot always get a chance, and he has to run the risk of the ballot. If this Amendment is accepted, then we shall have an absolute right to reconsider this measure, and compel the Government to place it in the Expiring Laws Continuance Bill, which would give us power to bring pressure to bear upon the Government to amend this measure if we should find that it requires it. This Amendment is simply to give the House a chance of discussing the measure at the end of five years.

Question put and negatived.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: I would suggest that we should take the Third Reading now.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: So far as I am concerned I have nothing more to say, but I think there are other hon. Members on this side who desire to say something further.

Motion made and Question proposed—
“That the Bill be now read the third time.”—(*The Lord Advocate.*)

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs): I object to the Third Reading being taken at this hour, and I think I should be in order in moving the adjournment of the debate.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Although I think we might have taken the Third Reading now, as this is an important Bill, I will not now press the motion.

Debate adjourned till Thursday.

BOARD OF EDUCATION [SALARIES.]

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Question again proposed—

“That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of a Salary, not exceeding £2,000, to the President of the Board of Education, and of salaries and remuneration to the secretaries, officers, and servants of the Board, in pursuance of any Act of the present Session to

Dr. Clark.

provide for the establishment of a Board of Education for England and Wales.”—(*Sir J. Gorst.*)

DR. CLARK: My objection to this motion is that you have been constructing, or attempting to construct, a secondary education for Scotland; you have been transferring from one class of Estimates to another new powers to the Education Board in Scotland, and you have never given us a proper opportunity of discussing them. From our share of the grant we have been spending £60,000 a year for a number of years under conditions that are not satisfactory to Scotch Members, and we have had no proper opportunity in Parliament of having the question considered. We have been having all these changes made in England, and yet time cannot be found to let us have a similar Bill for Scotland. I think as far as education is concerned we were in Scotland quite a century ahead of England, but we are getting terribly in arrear now. You are acting now contrary to the principle laid down years ago by a Unionist Chancellor of the Exchequer, and that was that the system of giving special grants should be discontinued. This principle has now been changed by the present Government.

*THE CHAIRMAN: I fail to see what the argument of the hon. Member has to do with the resolution now before the Committee, which is simply one to enable the members of the new board, if established, to have salaries.

DR. CLARK: But you are asking for money to be voted now out of the common purse.

*THE CHAIRMAN: That will be done on the Estimates, but there is no money being asked for now.

DR. CLARK: My opposition is that such a proposal is more necessary for Scotland, and yet this Resolution relates to England only. In Scotland we are in this position, that you really have got not only the money granted by Parliament, but also the money granted from Scotland, and that money is not now being properly used. Therefore we require organisation in Scotland first.

*THE CHAIRMAN: That might be an objection to the Bill itself which is now

before a Standing Committee, but it is not an objection to this motion.

DR. CLARK: Then I do not understand what this Resolution is for.

*THE CHAIRMAN: If the hon. Member will look at the Order paper he will see that this Resolution is to enable the Standing Committee to consider this question. Until the House passes this the Standing Committee cannot consider the question of allotting salaries to the offices of the new Board.

DR. CLARK: Then I desire to oppose that course being taken, and I have opposed this measure at every stage. Here you are proposing to give power to the Committee upstairs, and I do not want it to have that power. My opposition may look like a dog-in-the-manger policy, but what I wish to grumble about is the scandalous state of things in Scotland, and I desire to protest against the course taken by the Government. Of course, the predominant partner can always have its own way, but I think we have a right to appeal to the Government, because the action in Scotland by the Department is scarcely legal and very unconstitutional. I think that it is time that this matter was put in a proper constitutional and legal fashion. I do not want to hinder England from spending her own money on secondary education which will be valuable to this country, but I am anxious that such education in Scotland should be properly organised, and I wish to protest against what the Government have done in this respect.

*MR. YOXALL (Nottingham, W.): I object to this Resolution from an entirely different point of view—namely, that I think the money may not be required. I gather that the whole scheme and intention of the Bill is that the President of the Board of Education shall be the Lord President of the Council. Therefore you propose to authorise a payment which in the case I anticipate and apprehend will not be necessary, and accordingly this motion is superfluous. If the Vice-President of the Council, speaking on behalf of the Government, will now assure me that in his opinion this payment will be required for the President of the Board of Education, who will not be the Lord President of the Council and who will not

sit in the other House of Parliament, and that it is the intention of the Government that the first President of this Board shall be a person other than the Lord President and shall be a Member of this House, I will not oppose the grant. But I must take exception to it so long as we have not a Government statement in this Committee. The first appointment will strike the key-note for all future appointments, and the Government should be pledged to secure that the first President of this Board shall be a Member of this House and shall not be the Lord President of the Council. It is most important that the Minister responsible for the education of the country should be a Member of this House. The Education Estimates are discussed here, and the administration of the Minister is called into question here.

*THE CHAIRMAN: That surely is a matter for discussion in Committee on the Bill, where it would be perfectly open to the hon. Member to move that the President of the Board of Education shall be a Member of this House. It cannot be decided on this Resolution but in Committee on the Bill.

*MR. YOXALL: I have asked for an assurance, and unless it is given I think it will be my duty to oppose this grant.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (Sir J. GORST, Cambridge University): I can give the hon. Member this assurance: that if the Committee does not pass this Resolution it will be impossible for the President of the Board of Education to be a Member of this House. There will be no power whatever to give a salary to the President of the Board of Education at all unless the Committee passes this Resolution, and therefore if the hon. Member desires to have the President of the Board of Education a Member of this House he had better agree to the Resolution.

*MR. YOXALL: I am led to the conclusion that we shall not, by passing this motion, secure that the President of the Board of Education shall be a Member of this House. The right hon. Gentleman has given no answer to the important point which has been raised. I will therefore move to insert in the motion the following words: "Unless he holds

another salaried office." Am I in order, Sir, in moving that?

*THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member will be perfectly in order to do that in Committee on the Bill, but we are not in Committee on the Bill.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): The intention of the Government apparently is that the salary of the President of the Board of Education should be £2,000. We had a discussion earlier in this session as to the desirability of raising the salary attached to another office. I take it, however, that this Resolution is not intended to govern the future action of the Government or to express any permanent view on the subject of salary. I think it is deserving of consideration whether the office of President of the Board of Education will not become so important that a larger salary than £2,000 should be attached to it. I merely mention the matter now in order that we may not be supposed to assent to the view that the salary mentioned in the Resolution is sufficient for the President of the Board of Education, who will have his work very much increased by the Bill to which this Resolution refers, and who will become one of the most important Ministers of the State. I hope it will be borne in mind that we are not assenting to the salary being fixed at £2,000.

*MR. YOXALL: I beg to move "in line 3, after the word 'Education,' to insert the following words, 'provided he is a Member of this House.'"

*THE CHAIRMAN: That Amendment will not be in order. The proper time to raise the question will be when the operative part of the Bill is reached. This Resolution must be adopted before any Amendment of the Bill in this matter can be considered.

*MR. YOXALL: Is it impossible then to apply a condition to a grant of money from this House?

*THE CHAIRMAN: Certainly not. The hon. Member can attach whatever conditions he likes to the clause in the Bill, but this is not a clause in the Bill. It is only a Resolution enabling the Committee to consider the

Mr. Yoxall.

Bill, and when the clauses of the Bill are reached it will be open to the hon. Member to attach whatever condition he pleases.

*MR. YOXALL: Then I beg to move that the amount be reduced from £2,000 to £1,000. I do so because we have not received any assurance from the Vice-President or from any Member of the Government regarding the important point which has been raised.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out '£2,000' and insert '£1,000.'"
—(*Mr Yoxall.*)

Question proposed, "that '£2,000' stand part of the Question."

SIR JOHN GORST: I hope the hon. Member will not persist in his Amendment. He asked for an assurance which it is quite impossible to give. No Member of the Government—not even the Leader of the House—could give an assurance as to what it might please Her Majesty to do when this Bill comes into operation. The Bill will not come into operation until the 1st of April next, and how could even the Prime Minister pledge Her Majesty now as to what she would then do, when she might have wholly different advisers to those she has at present? The hon. Member will therefore see that it would be a most improper pledge to give.

MR. BRYCE: I think it is to be regretted that no member of the Government is present to express what I believe to be the view of the Government that the Minister of Education should hold a seat in the House of Commons. Clearly it would be to the interests of the public service that he should sit in this House.

*THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order. That is not the question before the Committee. The question before the Committee is whether the President of the Board of Education should receive a salary of £1,000 or £2,000.

MR. BRYCE: Then I would suggest to my hon. friend not to pursue his objection now. I think it would be better for him to reserve the point he desires to make, and in which he will find sympathy in the House generally,

until the Bill comes before the Standing Committee, when he can demand the assurance he desires and which I hope he will receive.

*MR. YOXALL: The Amendment entirely opposed to my desire in the matter, but I have moved it in order to obtain an assurance from the Government on a point to which I attach so much importance, and I must persist in it.

MR. CALDWELL: I think the action taken by my hon. friend is perfectly reasonable. We do not know whether the President is to be in this House or in the other House, and we ought to know the class of man who is to be appointed before we proceed to fix his salary. If a Member of this House is to be appointed, the House will probably consider that £2,000 will not be an unreasonable sum to give him, because there will be a feeling of satisfaction that the House will be receiving value. But if he is not a Member of

this House, then we shall not be receiving the benefit of his services, to which we would otherwise be entitled. In view of the uncertainty of the matter, and as a protest against the want of information under which we are labouring, it is quite reasonable to move that the sum should not exceed £1,000.

DR. CLARK: My hon. friend is in this position. Some of the questions he desires to raise cannot be raised until the Bill comes back from the Standing Committee, and he may find it impossible to have them considered on the Report stage. My hon. friend is now raising this question in perhaps the only form he can constitutionally do so. The only other way is to have the Bill re-committed.

Question put, "That £2,000 stand part of the motion."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 127; Noes, 50. (Division List, No. 219.)

AYES.

Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Waltham)
Balfour, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Man.)
Balfour, Rt. Hon. Gerald W. (Leeds)
Bartley, George C. T.
Barton, Dunbar Plunket
Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Begg, Ferdinand Fairclough
Bethell, Commander
Bhownaggee, Sir M. M.
Biddulph, Michael
Bigwood, James
Blakiston-Houston, John
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bullard, Sir Harry
Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birm.)
Chamberlain, J. A. (Worc'r)
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Cochrane, Hn. T. B. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir J. C. Ready
Colston, C. E. H. Athole
Cornwallis, Fiennes S. W.
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
Craddas, William Donaldson
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Curzon, Viscount
Davies, Sir H. D. (Chatham)
Denny, Colonel
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-

Doxford, William Theodore
Fellowes, Hon. A. Edward
Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
Giles, Charles Tyrrell
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, Hon. John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir J. Eldon
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gretton, John
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord George
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert Wm.
Hill, Arthur (Down, West)
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Howell, William Tudor
Howorth, Sir Henry Hoyle
Hutton, John (Yorks, N.R.)
Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Jenkins, Sir John Jones
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Jolliffe, Hon. H. George
Kemp, George
Kenyon, James
Keswick, William
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Lawrence, Sir E. Durning (Corn)
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hon. Walter (Liverp'l)
Lopes, Henry Yard Buller
Lloyd, Archie Kirkman
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
Macdonald, John Cumming
Maclure, Sir John William

M'Killop, James
Malcolm, Ian
Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
Middlemore, J. Throgmorton
Monckton, Edward Philip
Moore, William (Antrim, N.)
Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford)
Mount, William George
Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G. (Bute)
Murray, Chas. J. (Gventry)
Nicol, Donald Ninian
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Pease, Herbt. Pike (Darlington)
Phillipotts, Captain Arthur
Pilkington, R. (Lancs. Newton)
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Richards, Henry Charles
Richardson, Sir T. (Hartlepool)
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. C. Thomson
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
Sidebottom, Wm. (Derbyshire)
Stanley, Lord (Lancashire)
Stewart, Sir M. J. M'Taggart
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir J. M.
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Thomas, David A. (Merthyr)
Tomlinson, Wm. E. Murray
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Usborne, Thomas
Valentia, Viscount

Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard
Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
Wharton, Rt. Hn. John Lloyd
Williams, J. Powell (Birmg.)
Willox, Sir John Archibald

Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (Bath)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart-
Wyndham-Quin, Maj. W. H.

Young, Commander (Berks, E.)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Sir William Walrond and
Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Billson, Alfred
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Sir Charles (Glasgow)
Carvill, Patrick G. Hamilton
Clough, Walter Owen
Colville, John
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Curran, Thomas (Sligo, S.)
Dalziel, James Henry
Dewar, Arthur
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Evans, S. T. (Glamorgan)
Flynn, James Christopher

Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gourley, Sir E. Temperley
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hogan, James Francis
Horniman, Frederick John
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, W. (Carnarvonshire)
Kilbride, Denis
Leese, Sir J. F. (Accrington)
Leng, Sir John
Lewis, John Herbert
Macaleese, Daniel
MacDonnell, Dr. M. (Queen's
C.)
McEwan, William
Moss, Samuel

O'Connor, J. (Wicklow, W.)
Oldroyd, Mark
Paulton, James Mellor
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Randell, David
Rickett, J. Compton
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Souttar, Robinson
Steadman, William Charles
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Weir, James Galloway
Williams, J. Carvell (Notts)
Wilson John (Durham, Mid.)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr.
Yoxall and Dr. Clark.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved, that it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of a Salary, not exceeding £2,000, to the President of the Board of Education, and of Salaries and Remuneration to the Secretaries, Officers, and Servants of the Board, in pursuance of any Act of the present Session to provide for the establishment of a Board of Education for England and Wales.

Resolution to be reported To-morrow.

SMALL HOUSES (ACQUISITION OF OWNERSHIP) BILL.

[THIRD READING.]

Order for Third Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed,
"That the Bill be now read the third time."

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean): The Bill which is before us for the Third Reading is one which, on its Second Reading, was carried by more than the ordinary party majority. The Amendments which some of us who have always opposed similar Bills when in the hands of private Members, might have moved in order to carry out our views, either in Committee or on Report stage, would have struck so completely at the whole fabric and foundation of the Bill that it would hardly have been

respectful to the House which had pronounced distinctly in favour of the Bill, to have proposed them. Moreover, we should probably have had very small support from them. Therefore, we determined to preserve the expression of what we think of the nature of the Bill till the Third Reading. The view which some of us take of this Bill is that, as regards its principles, it is distinctly retrograde on the land question and likely to have a prejudicial effect on the future treatment of that question. It is retrograde not only as regards our own views, but the views of those who taught us in generations past on the land question; and retrograde as compared with the views of those who led the way in the trial of social experiments in our great self-governing colonies. Recently there has been a great deal of legislation both of this description and in regard to small holdings in the colonies of New Zealand and South Australia, under democratic ministries; but in the highly Conservative colony of Queensland there has been a complete departure from the principle of using public money, either from the State taxes or the rates for the purpose of conferring freeholds on individuals. This Bill is contrary to the whole course of modern legislation in these colonies, which are generally our guides in matters of legislation. I have to confess that I do not know why legislation of this kind should have been a failure in this country, and a success in Ireland. I see my hon. friend (Mr. Dillon), behind me, who can

speak for a very large section of the population there, and possibly he may be able to throw some light on the subject. But undoubtedly the whole series of Shaftesbury Acts, which embody the principle of this Bill, have been a dead letter in this country, and yet almost similar legislation in Ireland has been a success. Probably the opposition to this Bill is modified by the fact that the power which it confers on local authorities is permissive only. What will be the practical effect of this Bill? My right hon. friend who introduced the Bill evidently looks forward to its being used largely by the suburban populations in the neighbourhood of rapidly-growing towns. There are two classes by whom this Bill may be utilised—namely, the suburban populations and the inhabitants of mining districts, where there is frequently considerable difficulty with regard to housing. As regards suburban districts, when you use public money drawn from the rates to confer freeholds upon individuals, you are conferring upon them a property which is very rapidly rising in value, and out of which great numbers of people live in this country at the present time. In my opinion that unearned increment ought to go, when it has been obtained from the use of public money, not to the individual, but to the community, the rates of which you are spending for that purpose. As regards the mining districts, there is a danger of loss from an exodus of the population such as has taken place in the Cornish mining villages. There is only one other argument that I desire to address to the House. In the constituency which I represent I have had a good deal of experience of what is likely to be the effect on labour of freehold tenure. The mining population of Dean Forest are either freeholders or lodgers. They have the freehold franchise or no franchise at all, as the valuation of the houses is not sufficient to confer the lodger franchise. These persons are, to my mind, tied by the leg, and the effect of this Bill will be to fix labour and force the workmen to accept a lower wage than would otherwise be the case. I know that some Members on the opposite side imagine that the objections that some of us take to this Bill are of a political nature. I can assure those hon. Members that they make a great mistake. The freeholders in my constituency are overwhelmingly Radical,

and, indeed, much more Radical than the ordinary occupier.

MR. CALDWELL: From a Scotch point of view I thoroughly approve of the object aimed at in this Bill. The land rights in Scotland, however, are so essentially different from those in England that a Bill drawn simply to meet the English case cannot be successfully put into operation in Scotland. One important provision as between Scotland and England is the question of expense under the Bill. Under Clause 8 a house may be transferred for fees not exceeding ten shillings in the case of England; but in the case of Scotland there is no limit whatever as to expense. The local authorities may make a scale of fees, but there is no limit imposed; and I maintain that an attempt should have been made to deal on a plan of uniformity with the case of Scotland. Again, supposing that a working man in Scotland obtains a house under the Bill. If he were to die, it would, in all probability, be found that there were two heirs to the property. The widow possesses a certain right under the law of Scotland; then there is the eldest son, or it may be found that the legal heir is an entire stranger. There is no provision in the Bill to meet a case of that kind, and I think it is a matter of regret that no attempt has been made to bring the Bill into some kind of conformity with the state of the law in Scotland in respect to these cases. Again, in the matter of title I think that the Government should have provided for a statutory form of bond which would have been exceedingly simple and inexpensive. It is quite evident from the defects I have mentioned that when this Bill comes to be applied to Scotland there will not be the enthusiasm for it that there ought to be, simply because the Bill has not been adapted to suit the particular needs of the country.

MR. JOHN WILSON (Durham, Mid.): I quite agree with the right hon. Baronet that this is not a political question. I do not, however, exactly agree with him as to this Bill being useful to miners. If there is one class who might be dubious of the benefits of this Bill it is the miners of this country, because they are the most migratory portion of the population. The Bill is not designed to help men of migratory character, but those

whose occupation is permanent and little liable to change. I may, perhaps, be allowed to state that I am one of a committee who are trying to purchase a mining village for the purpose of providing for the old and worn out miners. We have already bought 113 houses. Now, if this Bill had been in force the whole thing would have collapsed, because three miles from this village is one built on building society lines by working men, and the houses can be bought now for £10 or £15 apiece. The effect of the clause in this Bill that the owner is bound to reside in it, and if he leaves the district he must sell it, is to give a man a poor inducement to build. There are three or four reasons why it will not be of use to men that are migratory. First of all, this Bill is not meant for a man of that character. Then if a man wants to build he would get better terms from a building society. £40 is a fabulous amount to many working men, and I think it would be better if the municipalities were to build houses and let them out at a fair rent. Then, again, a man can only sell to a man who is going to live in the house, and that naturally limits the demand for sale and depreciates, in consequence, the value. Then there is the lot of the widow. Working men, as well as others, have some regard to their wives and children, and if a man knows that if he dies after he has paid half the money his widow can only reside in that house another year, it will be a very serious bar to working men availing themselves under the Act. I should propose that the widow, so long as she fulfils the conditions required by the Act—the same as the husband would had he lived—should be allowed to continue to reside there. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will reconsider the sub-section of Clause 7, because without such an Amendment as I suggest the Act would not be complete.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): We have now reached the third and last stage of this Bill, which was placed in the front rank of the measures which Her Majesty's gracious Speech recommended to Parliament. In the opinion of the Government, at all events, it is an important measure, and I rejoice that it has passed through its

Mr. John Wilson.

several stages with so little opposition. Both on the First and Second Reading a number of hon. Members opposed it, but since then there has been no serious opposition. The Bill, in the first instance, was introduced by me as a non-controversial measure, but the treatment it received on the other side of the House tended to place it in the category of measures the credit and responsibility for which will have to go to the Party which introduced it. If it is a success we are entitled to the credit; if it is a failure we must take the responsibility. The hon. Member for Mid Durham has dealt with certain questions of detail, and has been kind enough to suggest an Amendment which he thought would make the Bill more satisfactory, I think the object of the hon. Member is already secured. There is nothing in the Bill to turn a widow out if she decides to remain in the house fulfilling the conditions of the Act. If, however, she desires to make other arrangements—she might like to go back to her relations—she is allowed twelve months to turn round in and negotiate a satisfactory settlement. The hon. Member also said, very truly, that probably this Bill was not calculated to give advantages to a migratory population. Whether a mining population comes within that definition I am not certain; but during the course of the Bill I received a deputation from the miners of Northumberland and Durham on another matter, and after that had been disposed of they spoke to me about this Bill, and expressed the opinion that it would be largely used even in such districts as the hon. Gentleman alluded to. But experience alone will show. I agree, however, that if a population is really migratory their good sense would show them that it was not advisable that they should burden themselves with a house. Still, it is no objection to the Bill that it does not benefit every class. If it benefits a large number of the working class the Government will be perfectly satisfied. With regard to the speech of the right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean, I cannot understand for what reason his speech was made. As far as I can see, the right hon. Gentleman recognised the fact that the Bill was supported by the vast majority in the House, and that therefore it was useless to oppose it; but the right hon. Gentleman took the opportunity of laying down

a great principle which I have never heard laid down before, and which I believe has been created and established by my right hon. friend himself and another hon. Member who usually votes with him—that it is wrong that assistance should be rendered by the municipal authorities or by the State to enable anybody to acquire a freehold. I differ from that principle entirely. It seems to me I could find cases in which it is most desirable that the State should create freeholds. For instance, there is the case of Ireland. On the ground of securing the prosperity and tranquillity of Ireland it was held that it was desirable to stimulate and encourage the creation of freeholds in Ireland. Why should it not be a desirable thing to create freeholds in this country? If such a thing were feasible, I would like to see every working man the owner of his own freehold house, and if there is anything that legislation can do to assist towards that consummation it will have my cordial sympathy and strong support. This Bill in its general treatment has been received with contemptuous depreciation on the part of hon. Members on the other side. The Government has been accused of gaining votes by making promises. I do not know whether we have gained votes or not, but undoubtedly at the last election many supporters of the Government put this Bill in a very prominent position indeed, and apparently it was a very popular measure, or it had at all events an enormous amount of support. I believe hon. Members on the other side, when they were questioned with reference to it, speaking generally, professed to be even more enthusiastic about it than the Unionist party were themselves. There were some exceptions. There was the right hon. Member for East Fife, who denounced the proposal in the country, and I fully expected he would denounce it in scathing terms when the Bill was brought forward—that he would come down red hot; but he came down in the mildest possible way, and although he did suggest it was an “infinitesimal adumbration of the real problem,” still he went on to say he could not on any account oppose the Second Reading. The right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean also opposed it, but on entirely different grounds from any he had given in the House. The right hon. Gentleman when speaking in the country, said before a

Yorkshire constituency that he objected to the Bill because it would create a great number of working men Conservatives.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: I have repeatedly declared that I never said anything of the kind. What I did say was that Mr. Wrightson, the original author of the scheme, was reported to have made a statement to that effect, but that personally I believed the opposite. I, myself, represent a great many working-men freeholders, who are more Radical than those who are not.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: In the House, at all events, the only reason given against the Bill has been the general reason that it would not be of any use. That issue has now to be tried. Whether it is of use or not depends, of course, in a great measure on the working classes, whether they desire it, now that the Bill is passed, as much as they appeared to do when it was only promised. If I may judge by the very large correspondence which has reached me from all parts of the country on the subject, there must be a great number of working men who will gladly take advantage of it. But, in the second place, the success of the Bill depends on the local authorities. It is true that the small holdings legislation has been taken much less advantage of than its promoters anticipated, but that is because, in my opinion, the carrying out of that legislation has been left to the authority of the county councils, which have to deal with so large an area that they have not the requisite local knowledge of individual circumstances. I hope some Amendments may be made in that Act and further opportunity afforded for testing it in the country districts. In the present case we have given the execution of the Act into the hands of authorities which are really local, and upon whom such persons as desire to take advantage of it would bring personal pressure. I do not like to be optimistic, so I will content myself by saying that here is a Bill which carries out one of the most important promises the Unionist party gave at the General Election. We believe and hope it will be successful, and that it will be a great advantage to the working-class population. We have received no assistance in carrying it through the House from the other side, and the other

side is committed by those who hitherto represented them to the opinion that the Act will be useless. I simply awaited the judgment of the community.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read the third time, and passed.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING (CLAUSES) BILL.

Considered in Committee, and reported; as amended, to be considered To-morrow.

IMPROVEMENT OF LAND BILL.

(SECOND READING.)

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*The Solicitor-General.*)

MR. SAMUEL EVANS (Glamorganshire, Mid): I am somewhat surprised that the Solicitor-General, who is in charge of this Bill, has not given us any information at all as to why it should be accepted. Generally speaking, the policy of the Bill is to give further facilities to landlords for the purpose of making improvements upon their estates. If this were a Bill which would have the effect of bringing into cultivation land not already improved, there might be a great deal to be said in favour of it. But we know from published Returns that the principal cases in which owners of estates have gone to the Commissioners under the old Act were not for the sake of bringing land into cultivation at all, but chiefly for the benefit of the land which is still in the hands of the owners of the estates. It appears from tables supplied from the Board of Agriculture that the expenditure for mansion-houses during the period of depression between 1879 and 1894 was no less than £430,737; whereas during that period only £377,920 was borrowed and charged under the Act for the erection of labourers' cottages. It was the policy of the Improvement of Land Act, 1864, to enable landowners who might be limited owners of their estates to borrow money upon favourable terms, not for the purpose of increasing the mansion-houses, but of making improvements in favour of their tenants, and particularly for the erection of labourers' cottages. The expenditure

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upon farm buildings during that same period was £1,831,718, and for drainage £1,047,274. It cannot be said that the expenditure for farm buildings and drainage was as much in excess of that in connection with mansion-houses as was intended by the Act of 1864. Take the year 1890, which is a fair sample. The amount spent on mansion-houses was nearly £80,000, whereas the expenditure on labourers' cottages was only £8,000, or merely one-tenth. While for farm buildings the amount was £67,000, or £10,000 less than the expenditure on mansion-houses. These figures show what has been the chief use of the Act of 1864. If it could be shown to the House that the object of giving yet more favourable terms to the landowners was to bring more land into cultivation, to give compensation to tenants for the improvements they effected on the lands, and to provide labourers' cottages, the House might, in these days of agricultural depression, listen to such a case. But what case can possibly be made out for giving further facilities to landowners to borrow money on favourable terms, and to extend the period for repayment from twenty-five years to forty, as is now proposed? It is true that under Clause 1 it is only intended that the extension should be in respect of future advances, but under a subsequent sub-section, where advances have been made "either before or after the passing of the Act," the period may be extended. After the figures which I have given I think the House is entitled to ask what case has been made out for extending the period of the repayment of these loans. I hope it will not be said that this is a non-controversial measure. I think I have indicated some reasons why the Bill should not be given a Second Reading without some explanation, and I beg to move "That the Bill be read a second time this day three months."

MR. A. C. HUMPHREYS-OWEN (Montgomery): I beg to second that.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day three months.'"—(*Mr. Samuel Evans.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (Mr. LONG, Liver-

pool, West Derby): As the hon. Member takes some objection to this Bill, it cannot be described as being noncontroversial, although I had hoped it might be. As to the criticism of the hon. Member, he will see that there is a distinction between the power granted in Sub-section 4 and that in the preceding sub-section of the clause. Everybody who has watched the history of the expenditure of money upon landed estates knows that there is no form of expenditure more precarious or so little likely to give a return to the owners as that which takes the form of tree cultivation. The reason for the extension of the period for the repayment of loans already contracted is that if the trees planted survive the first seven years they have got through the most critical time, and there is then every reasonable probability that the enterprise will be successful. The expense attendant upon this particular form of cultivation is very great, and everyone who has studied the question will agree that everything which is reasonable and fair and just ought to be done to encourage landowners to develop those portions of their estates which are suitable for nothing else by devoting them to tree planting. I do not know what the hon. Member calls "favourable terms," but anyone who has experience knows that the charge becomes a very heavy one indeed, and it can really only be undertaken from a feeling of patriotism and a desire to develop the estate in order that the future generation rather than the present may benefit by it.

MR. LEWIS (Flint Boroughs): Can the right hon. Gentleman say what amount has been expended on trees and woods during the last thirty-five years?

MR. LONG: I cannot state that without reference. I should think it would probably be very small. I cannot conceive anybody embarking upon any expenditure of that kind under conditions such as now exist. It is because we want to encourage expenditure under that head that we ask the House to give these further powers. With reference to the earlier part of the Bill, the hon. Gentleman referred to the fact that a large amount has been expended on manor-houses. I do not know that that expenditure is one which deserves the condemnation of the House. It is paid for by the tenants for life

and their successors, and I should certainly have been under the impression that anything the House could reasonably do which threw all the responsibility upon the tenant for life and his successor would have, as one result, the encouragement of people to live on their own properties, and spend their money in the development of those properties. This is surely an object the House would further rather than retard. Yet to judge from the remarks of the hon. Gentleman, that is an expenditure which ought not to be encouraged. Everyone knows that the limited owner of an estate has the greatest difficulty in finding capital for the permanent development of the estate. The buildings of labourers' cottages is an undertaking which I defy the ordinary tenant for life to embark upon unless he can get money upon reasonable terms such as are here proposed. In regard to the extension of the period of repayment, the whole thing is in the discretion of the Board of Agriculture, and the whole policy of the Board has been to act in these matters with the utmost regard for the future generation, rather than to encourage tenants for life to embark on reckless expenditure by giving them too easy terms. The object has always been to see that the tenant for life is not allowed to indulge in expenditure without safeguarding the position of the "remainderman." But unless the facilities enjoyed by tenants for life for obtaining money for these purposes are improved, undoubtedly there will not be the development which we desire to see. The remaining provisions are very simple, and it is not necessary for me to occupy the attention of the House any longer in regard to the Bill, to which I hope the House will, without long debate, give their assent.

MR. LEWIS: We on this side of the House are equally solicitous with hon. Gentlemen opposite that everything that can fairly be done for the development of land and landed property and buildings on landed property should be done, but I should have been glad if the right hon. Gentleman had addressed himself to the remarkable figures which were quoted by my hon. friend, which showed how the money had been expended by landowners. Would it not be possible in some way to encourage landowners to expend their money on the improvement of the

labourers' cottages on their estates? Surely when the Government undertake a work of this character they ought to do it in such a way and upon such conditions and terms as would induce landowners to improve the labourers' cottages upon their estates. We have to remember that for every single mansion-house there are probably one hundred labourers' cottages. I quite agree that whatever can be done to encourage the afforesting of this country ought to be done. I only wish it were possible for the Woods and Forests Department to do a great deal more in this direction. When we look at what has been done in Belgium, for instance, where in the course of twenty or thirty years large tracts of land which were once waste land have been planted with trees, and are now covered with profitable forests; and when we remember what many landowners with an eye to the future are doing in many parts of this country, I am sure there is nobody who would object to placing it within the power of the comparatively impecunious landowner to plant his land with trees wherever that may be necessary. Such planting not only beautifies the country, but in course of time it increases the wealth of the country. To that part of the Bill I personally should not care to offer any objection whatever. It seems to be a very good and profitable provision, provided it is carried on in a proper manner and the Board of Agriculture exercises a wise discretion. But I would press upon the right hon. Gentleman that, after all, the important question raised by my hon. friend ought to be faced by the Government. Certainly the responsibility of meeting the point lies upon the Government, and I hope they will do their best to induce landowners to improve the small property upon their estates. There are many persons who have not got the means to improve the land, and we ought to make the terms as easy as possible in that direction. When we consider the condition of labourers' cottages throughout the country we must feel that the existing state of the law is certainly not what it ought to be, and this Bill does not improve things in that respect. I appeal to the Government while they have the opportunity to make a necessary change of this character. I think that a short discussion upon the Second Reading of this Bill will not be without value if it directs attention to

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this particular question, in the hope that when the measure reaches the Committee stage the Government will be able to introduce such Amendments as will carry out this great and beneficial reform, which does not affect merely a few landowners, but affects the life, the health, and the comfort of a vast number of people in this country.

MR. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, Basingstoke): With regard to what has been said about mansion houses, I desire to point out that the money expended upon them provides a great deal of employment, and is consequently of great benefit to a country district. Although I am very much in favour of advancing money to enable owners to build better cottages, I am glad to say that better cottages are already being built. It is a great advantage, nevertheless, to the poor part of the country population to have these large houses in their midst. I am very much in favour of this Bill, because I believe it will tend not only to the good of the owners of these estates, but it will encourage a life-tenant to develop his estate, and this will be to the benefit of his poorer neighbours.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston): I should like to say that I quite agree with my right hon. friend with regard to the advantage of developing many of the estates throughout the country, and I think any Bill which provides means by which landowners may go in for work of that kind will not be only useful in the improvement of their estates, but will also be useful in improving the general condition of the country and the working class population. I am disappointed, however, that a Bill which proposes to give much easier terms should make no provision for what is after all the crying scandal of our time, and that is the better housing of the poor in the rural districts. No effort is made in this Bill to secure any improvement in labourers' cottages. We have had in London repeatedly evidence that people cannot find homes in which to dwell in decency and comfort, and the same remark applies to rural districts. There are many labourers in the country who have had to go to the workhouse because they could not find a house —

MR. LONG: I think the right hon. Gentleman is under a misapprehension, for this Bill does not propose to lend money to landowners.

SIR WALTER FOSTER: I shall be glad to meet the superficial criticism of my right hon. friend. At all events, the money of the public will go to these landowners, who will be included in the longer period for repayment. One thing that is necessary for the agricultural interests of the country is that all classes should benefit by a provision of this kind, and I want that class to benefit which has been steadily drifting from the country into the towns simply for the want of decent housing accommodation, and it would be easy for the right hon. Gentleman to introduce some provision which would direct the operation of this Bill into the channel to which I allude. Not long ago I had a census taken of a large portion of rural England in regard to the condition of the poor, and in 1884 a Commission on the housing problem brought forward evidence as to the necessity for an improvement. Returns which have been recently made in the villages of rural England show that 25 per cent. of the cottages there are unfit for human habitation, and that is a condition of things which must necessarily tend to depopulate the rural districts. Such a state of things drives the men away from the villages, and in a Bill like this an opportunity is afforded to make some provision which would not only be good for the landowner, but would also be good for the population, and would also lessen competition in the labour market in towns, and prevent the exodus of the population from the rural districts, where people cannot at present bring up their families in decency and comfort. Almost daily in the rural districts houses are being pulled down because they have been condemned by the sanitary authority, and many of them are allowed to remain simply because if they are pulled down others will not be put up in their places. It is, therefore, incumbent upon the Board of Agriculture to seize this opportunity of bringing in some scheme by means of which some of this money should be utilised for the purpose of providing better housing accommodation for the rural poor. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will have ingenuity enough to insert some words in the Bill

which will carry out the reform to which I have alluded.

*MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I should like to know how this Bill will operate in the Highlands of Scotland or in the Island of Lewis, which belongs to one individual. The remarks of the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down are very appropriate, and I agree that some provision should be made to prevent this money being spent solely for the benefit of the landlords. Surely it should be expended in the interests of the people. There are two million acres of land in the Highlands of Scotland suitable for agricultural and grazing purposes, the development of which would keep the population on the soil instead of allowing the land to lie idle or be used for the purposes of sport. I trust the right hon. Gentleman will take the advice given by the last speaker and make some arrangement whereby the working classes will be benefited as well as the landlords.

DR. CLARK: I have again to congratulate the Minister for Agriculture upon having withdrawn a Bill which was intended to do something for the benefit of agriculture.

MR. LONG: I have not withdrawn any such Bill. Objection was taken to the measure from the opposite side of the House.

DR. CLARK: We have had a pledge year after year in the Queen's Speech that something would be done to benefit agriculture, and I again congratulate the right hon. Gentleman the Minister for Agriculture upon pitching over the tenant-farmers for the benefit of the landowners.

*MR. HEMPHILL (Tyrone, N.): I have been very much taken by surprise by the attempt which has been made to rush this Bill at this late hour through the House. Some hon. Gentlemen opposite smile, but I apprehend that very few of the Members present in the House have the least idea of what this Bill proposes to amend. It is not by any means an easy measure to understand, and I think my hon. friends opposite will see that when I tell them that the principle to which this Bill refers, and with which it deals, is that contained in the Improve-

ment of Land Act of 1864, which applies to every part of the Empire, and which contains no less than ninety-one sections. That is not an Act of Parliament which ought to be dealt with in a hasty manner, and, as an Irish Member, all I require is to be allowed sufficient time to understand what the nature of the legislation is that is going on from time to time. This Bill has been brought in without a word of explanation, and I doubt whether any Member present heard the explanation which was given when the First Reading was taken. Certainly no explanation was given to-night upon the Second Reading, and the only information I have as to the object of the Bill is what I have been able to gather from the memorandum, which states that the object of the measure is to extend the period for the repayment of charges made under the Land Act from twenty-five years to forty years. I would remind hon. Members of what occurred last week, when an appeal was made from the Irish benches to get an extension of the time for the repayment of loans for the purchase of glebe lands. A strong appeal was then made by the Irish Members to have that measure of justice done to Ireland. It was then pointed out that interest on money was now lower than it was in 1870, when these loans were advanced for the purchase of these glebe lands in Ireland, and all we asked for was that the period for repayment should be extended from thirty-five to fifty years. On that occasion it was demonstrated that no loss would be sustained by the Exchequer, but we were nevertheless met by a *non possumus* from which there was no appeal. It is rather remarkable that the first clause of this Bill seeks to do the very same thing for the landowners of England which was refused to Ireland, and I ask if that is reasonable. That is not equal justice to both parts of the country. Why should this concession be refused to Ireland while it is given to the landowners of England by this Bill without any explanation whatever? I say that Legislation of this sort is calculated to shake one's confidence in the Imperial legislature for doing equal justice to every part of the kingdom. This Bill applies to Ireland, and yet no indication has been given to the Irish Members that this Bill would be taken up to-night, and legislation is now being sought for the purpose of enabling landlords who have spent

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large sums on the improvement of their mansion-houses and very small sums on the building of labourers' cottages to have this concession made to them, and to have the time for the repayment of their advances extended. I intend to support the hon. Member who has moved that this Bill be read this day three months, and I do so for the purpose of giving the Members from Ireland and myself an opportunity of studying this Bill and seeing how far the interests of Ireland are affected by a Bill which I confess candidly and honestly I have not had an opportunity of mastering the details of. I shall therefore support my hon. and learned friend if he goes to a division, and I trust that my hon. friends below the gangway will also support this motion.

*Mr. LOYD (Berkshire, Abingdon): The impression which has been given by the remarks which have been made by gentlemen opposite is that this Bill has been brought in solely in the interests of the landowners. It is suggested that the Government have been remiss in not providing that the facilities for loans should extend to purposes from which the labourers might benefit in respect of their cottage accommodation. But Sub-section 3 of the first clause of this Bill affords facilities for advancing money "for the execution of all or any of the improvements mentioned in Section 9 of the principal Act." The principal Act is the Act of 1864, and number 8 of the 12 improvements mentioned in the 9th Section is:—

"The erection of labourers' cottages, farm houses and other buildings * * * and the improvement of and addition to labourers' cottages, farm houses, etc. * * * so as such improvements and additions be of a permanent nature."

Therefore this Bill does refer to the improvement of the condition of labourers' cottages, an object which both sides of this House are, I am sure, equally desirous to promote.

MR. HEDDERWICK: I think it is almost impossible for anyone who reads over this Bill to comprehend precisely what it refers to at all. From the first clause to the last it is full of cross references, and unless one were to have before him all the numerous Acts which are referred to it would be absolutely impossible to understand the real objects of this measure. It has been said that this Act is not likely to do anything to im-

prove the labourers' cottages or the condition of the poor population in the rural districts. The hon. Gentleman opposite has pointed out a section in the Act of 1864 in which he says the erection of labourers' cottages is actually referred to. But what has been the effect of that provision? I do not believe that any cottages have ever been built under the provisions of the Act which has been alluded to by the hon. and learned Member opposite; neither do I believe that any farm buildings have been improved in consequence of its operation. I should like to know of any instances where labourers' cottages have been built under that Act.

MR. LONG: I can give you an instance on my own estate.

MR. HEDDERWICK: There appear to have been some cottages built on the right hon. Gentleman's estate, but those cottages, while nominally built in the interests of the poor labourers, are really built in the interests of the right hon. Gentleman's estate. In most cases where cottages have been built under this Act they have been built as improvements upon the estate. I contend that this Bill has not in any way been devised in the interests of the poor labourers, and for these reasons I shall support my hon. friend.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 140; Noes, 44. (Division List No. 220.)

AYES.

Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (Waltham)
Balcarras, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Manchester)
Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. D. W. (Leeds)
Banbury, Frederick George
Barton, Dunbar Plunket
Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
Beckett, Ernest William
Begg, Ferdinand Faithfull
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bethell, Commander
Bigwood, James
Brassey, Albert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bullard, Sir Harry
Cawley, Frederick
Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (Birmingham)
Chamberlain, J. A. (Worcester)
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Cochrane, Hn. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir J. Charles Ready
Colston, Chas. E. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Cornwallis Fiennes S. W.
Cox, Irwin Edw. Bainbridge
Cranborne, Viscount
Cross, H. Shepherd (Bolton)
Cubitt, Hon. Henry
Curzon, Viscount
Dalkeith, Earl of
Denny, Colonel
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn E.
Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hn. Vicary (St. Albans)
Giles, Charles Tyrrell

Godson, Sir Augustus F.
Goldsworthy, Major-General
Gordon, Hon. John Edward
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir J. Eldon
Goschen, Rt. Hon. G. J. (St. George's)
Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Gull, Sir Cameron
Hamilton, Rt. Hon. Lord Geo.
Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert W.
Hanson, Sir Reginald
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Helder, Augustus
Henderson, Alexander
Hermion-Hodge, Robert Trotter
Hill, Sir Edward Stock (Bristol)
Hoare, Samuel (Norwich)
Hornby, Sir William Henry
Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Jolliffe, Hon. H. George
Kemp, George
Kenyon, James
Keswick, William
Lawrence, Sir E. Durning (Cornwall)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
Llewellyn, Sir Dillwyn (Swansea)
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hon. Walter (Liverpool)
Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Lytelton, Hon. Alfred
Macartney, W. G. Ellison
Macedona, John Cumming
Maclure, Sir John William
McArthur, Charles (Liverpool)
McKillop, James
Malcolm, Ian
Milward, Colonel Victor
Monckton, Edward Philip
Montagu, Hon. J. S. (Hants.)
Moore, William (Antrim, N.)
Morgan, Hn. F. (Monmouth)

Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, A. H. A. (Deptford)
Mount, William George
Muntz, Philip A.
Murray, Rt. Hon. A. G. (Bate)
Murray, Chas. J. (Coventry)
Newdigate, F. Alexander
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington)
Phillipotts, Captain Arthur
Pilkington, R. (Lancs, Newton)
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Pollock, Harry Frederick
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pryce Jones, Lt.-Col. Edw.
Purvis, Robert
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Rentoul, James Alexander
Richardson, Sir T. (Hartlepool)
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. C. Thomson
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Seely, Charles Hilton
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
Sidebottom, Wm. (Derbyshire)
Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk)
Stanley, Lord (Lancs.)
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stock, James Henry
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
Valentia, Viscount
Warde, Lieut.-Col. C. E. (Kent)
Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John Lloyd
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Williams, Joseph Powell (Birmingham)
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hon. E. R. (Bath)
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Young, Commander (Berks, E.)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Sir William Walrond and
Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Allen, W. (Newc.-under-Lyme)
 Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbert H.
 Billson, Alfred
 Bolton, Thomas Dolling
 Burt, Thomas
 Caldwell, James
 Carvill, Patrick G. Hamilton
 Clark, Dr. G. B. (Caithness-sh.)
 Colville, John
 Dalziel, James Henry
 Davitt, Michael
 Dewar, Arthur
 Dillon, John
 Donelan, Captain A.
 Doogan P. C.
 Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)

Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
 Goddard, Daniel Ford
 Hayne, Rt. Hn. Charles Seale-
 Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Chas. H.
 Horniman, Frederick John
 Kilbride, Denis
 Lloyd-George, David
 Macaleese, Daniel
 MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
 Moss, Samuel
 Nussey, Thomas Willans
 O'Connor J. (Wicklow, W.)
 O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
 Olroyd, Mark
 Price, Robert John
 Randell, David

Rickett, J. Compton
 Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
 Shaw, Charles E. (Stafford)
 Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
 Smith, Samuel (Flint)
 Steadman, William Charles
 Sullivan, Donald (Westmeath)
 Thomas, David A. (Merthyr)
 Weir, James Galloway
 Williams, J. Carvell (Notts).
 Wilson, John (Govan)
 Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
 Mr. Evans and Mr. Hedder-
 wick.

Main Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

MR. LONG: I beg to move that the Bill be referred to the Standing Committee on Law.

MR. SAMUEL EVANS: I object entirely to that proposal being made without any notice having been given. The Bill ought to be dealt with in a Committee of the whole House. It was not expected that the Bill would be reached to-night, and I think as a general rule we have a right to protest

against a Bill being sent to a Standing Committee without any indication being given that that course would be adopted. If the Government proposes to go on with the motion I shall ask the House to divide.

Motion made and Question put—

"That the Bill be committed to the Standing Committee on Law, etc."—(Mr. Walter Long.)

The House divided:—Ayes, 143; Noes, 44. (Division List No. 221.)

AYES.

Arrol, Sir William
 Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
 Bailey, James (Walworth)
 Balcarras, Lord
 Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (Man.)
 Balfour, Rt. Hon. G. W. (Leeds)
 Banbury, Frederick George
 Barton, Dunbar Plunket
 Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benj.
 Beach, Rt. Hn. Sir M. H. (Bristol)
 Beckett, Ernest William
 Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
 Bethell, Commander
 Bigwood, James
 Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
 Brasse, Albert
 Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
 Bullard, Sir Harry
 Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
 Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (Birm.)
 Chamberlain, J. Austen (Worc'r)
 Chaplin, Right Hon. Henry
 Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
 Coghill, Douglas Harry
 Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
 Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
 Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
 Compton, Lord Alwyne
 Cook, Fred. Lucas (Lambeth)
 Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
 Cornwallis, Fiennes Stanley W.
 Cox, Iwrin Edward Bainbridge
 Cranborne, Viscount
 Cross, Herb. Shepherd (Bolton)
 Cubitt, Hon. Henry
 Curzon, Viscount
 Dalkeith, Earl of
 Denny, Colonel
 Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph

Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
 Douglas-Pennant, Hon. E. S.
 Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edwd.
 Field, Admiral (Eastbourne)
 Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
 Fisher, William Hayes
 Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)
 Garfit, William
 Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
 Giles, Charles Tyrrell
 Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
 Goldsworthy, Major-General
 Gordon, Hon. John Edward
 Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
 Goschen, Rt. Hn. G. J. (St. Geo's
 Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
 Gretton, John
 Greville, Hon. Ronald
 Gull, Sir Cameron
 Hamilton, Rt. Hn. Lord Geo.
 Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robt. Wm.
 Hanson, Sir Reginald
 Hare, Thomas Leigh
 Helder, Augustus
 Henderson, Alexander
 Hermon-Hodge, Robt. Trotter
 Hill, Sir Edw. Stock (Bristol)
 Hoare, Samuel (Norwich)
 Hornby, Sir William Henry
 Jebb, Richard Claverhouse
 Jeffreys, Arthur Frederick
 Jessel, Capt. Herbert Merton
 Johnston, William (Belfast)
 Jolliffe, Hon. H. George
 Kemp, George
 Kenyon, James
 Keswick, William
 King, Sir Henry Seymour
 Lawrence, Sir E. D. (Corn.)

Lawrence, Wm. F. (Liverpool)
 Lees, Sir Elliott (Birkenhead)
 Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
 Llewelyn, Sir Dillwyn (Sw'n's a)
 Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
 Long, Rt. Hon. W. (Liverpool)
 Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
 Loyd, Archie Kirkman
 Lucas-Shadwell, William
 Littelton, Hon. Alfred
 Macartney, W. G. Ellison
 Macdonald, John Cumming
 Macdure, Sir John William
 McArthur, Charles (Liverpool)
 McKillop, James
 Malcolm, Ian
 Milward, Colonel Victor
 Monckton, Edward Philip
 Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (Hants)
 Moore, William (Antrim, N.)
 Morgan, Hn. F. (Monm'thsh)
 Morrell, George Herbert
 Morton, Arthur H. A. (Deptford)
 Mount, William George
 Munz, Philip A.
 Murray, Rt. Hn. A. G. (Bute)
 Murray, Charles J. (Coventry)
 Nicol, Donald Ninian
 Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington)
 Phillpotts, Captain Arthur
 Pilkington, R. (Lancs., Newton)
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Pollock, Harry Frederick
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edwd.
 Purvis, Robert
 Raech, Major Frederic Carne
 Rentoul, James Alexander
 Richardson, Sir T. (Hartlepool)

Ritchie, Rt. Hn. C. Thomson
Round, James
Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
Seely, Charles Hilton
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
Sidebottom, William (Derbyshire)
Stanley, Hon. A. (Ormskirk)
Stanley Lord (Lancs.)
Stock, James Henry

Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Wm. Ed. Murray
Valentia, Viscount
Warde, Lieut.-Col. C.E. (Kent)
Welby, Lieut.-Col. A. C. E.
Wharton, Rt. Hon. John L.
Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
Williams, J. Powell- (Birm.)
Wilcox, Sir John Archibald

Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson-Todd, W. H. (Yorks.)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E.R. (Bath)
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart-
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Young, Commander (Berks, E.)

TELLER FOR THE AYES—Sir
William Walrond and Mr.
Anstruther.

NOES.

Allen, W. (Newc.-under-Lyme)
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbert H.
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cawley, Frederick
Clark, Dr. G.B. (Caithness-sh.)
Colville, John
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan- (Cardigan)
Davitt, Michael
Dewar, Arthur
Dillon, John
Donelan, Captain A.
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)

Foster, Sir Walter (Derby Co.)
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale-
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Horniman, Frederick John
Jones, Wm. (Carnarvonshire)
Kilbride, Denis
Lloyd-George, David
Macaleese, Daniel
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
Moss, Samuel
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
Oldroyd, Mark
Price, Robert John

Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sinclair, Capt. J. (Forfarshire)
Smith, Samuel (Flint)
Steadman, William Charles
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
Weir, James Galloway
Williams, John Carvell (Notts)
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Mr. Evans and Mr. Chan-
ning.

Bill committed to the Standing Com-
mittee on Law, etc.

PALATINE COURT OF DURHAM
BILL [Lords].

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made and Question proposed,
"That the Bill be now read a second
time."

MR. SAMUEL EVANS: On a point
of order, I should like to ask whether
this Bill should not originate in a Com-
mittee of Ways and Means. The proposal
of the Bill is that the liability of the
Ecclesiastical Commissioners to pay the
salary of the Chancellor of Durham should
be transferred to the Consolidated Fund.
Under these circumstances should there
not be a Resolution in Committee?

*MR. SPEAKER: I have not yet got a
copy of the Bill; but I do not think the
hon. Member has read the whole of it.
It is quite obvious, however, that coming
from the Lords it cannot be a Money
Bill.

MR. SAMUEL EVANS: My objection
to the Second Reading arises from the
first and chief clause, which proposes that
the salary of the Chancellor shall be paid
out of the Consolidated Fund. I believe
these words were not inserted in the
Lords.

*MR. SPEAKER: I have now a copy of
the Bill, and it is quite clear that the
ordinary practice has been followed. The
Bill contains some clauses which require
the preliminary resolution of a Committee
before they can be dealt with by the House.
These clauses are under-scored, and are
really not yet in the Bill at all.

MR. SAMUEL EVANS: We have had
no explanation as to why this Bill should
be passed, and it is obvious that it cannot
be passed without some discussion. The
proposal of the Government is to introduce
in Committee a clause that the salary of
the Chancellor should be paid out of the
Consolidated Fund. Up to now it has
been paid by the Ecclesiastical Com-
missioners and it is provided in the Bill
that the Commissioners shall pay to the
Treasury a certain capital sum to be
agreed upon by the Commissioners and
the Treasury. That is an objectionable
system, because when the Treasury deals
with the Ecclesiastical Commissioners it
is very likely to make a bargain favour-
able to them. When that sum is paid the
liability of the Commissioners will cease
altogether, and the salary will be paid
out of the Consolidated Fund. I am
afraid all this is done in order to take
from the cognisance and purview of this
House certain debateable matters. You
are constantly bringing grounds forward
as to why the machinery of Bills should
be left to the Lord Chancellor. Clause 3

of this Bill provides that the salary of the judge shall be such an amount as the Lord Chancellor shall direct. Is there any precedent for saying that the salary of any particular judge is not to be fixed by this House but by the Lord Chancellor with the sanction of the Treasury? The clause also says that at the expiration of five years the salary will come up for revision, but the House will have nothing to do with the matter. As long as his salary is paid out of the Consolidated Fund a judge cannot be removed if he behaves himself. But in this case the Lord Chancellor may vary the salary as he thinks fit. A further clause proposes that the jurisdiction of the Palatine Court shall be such as the jurisdiction exercised by the High Court through the Chancery Division. That, again, is not only an extension of the jurisdiction of the Palatine Court, but it may also extend or minimise the *locale* of the jurisdiction by extending or diminishing the locality over which the jurisdiction extends. I should have thought the best thing to do would have been to abolish the Palatine Court altogether, and make it an ordinary court. We know that the history of the Palatine Courts is a very old one, but it is only because of the vested interests connected with them that these courts have lasted as long as they have. I have pointed out matters which are objectionable in this Bill. The House loses all power under it to discuss the conduct of the judge or to diminish his salary. I object entirely to legislation by means of reference. It is done, I believe, in order to stop discussion in this House. I am informed that the usual instructions now given to the Parliamentary draughtsman by a Government—whether it be Conservative or Liberal—is to put as much as possible into the schedule, and to make the Bill as short as he can. The result of this is lamentable, as is shown by the Compensation Act of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham. I believe he takes the credit for drafting the Act himself. He probably said to the draughtsman, "I will draft this Bill myself in such a way that common-sense will work it." The judges in the Court of Appeal say that it is the most complex Act they have ever had to deal with. I merely mention that in order to show the difficulties the House is constantly faced with by allowing these

matters to go outside its own power and referring them to the Lord Chancellor and the Treasury. We have had no reason given us why the House should pass the Second Reading of this Bill. The fact that it comes from the Lords may show that it is not a Money Bill, but it is to be a Money Bill before it passes this House, and we should have some explanation concerning it.

THE SOLICITOR-GENERAL (Sir R. B. FINLAY, Inverness Burghs): I think that every hon. Member with a knowledge of the locality concerned will agree that the existence of this court is desirable. The objections taken by the hon. and learned Member are three. First, he says that the provision with regard to the judge is objectionable, but it has been felt, and properly felt, that it was desirable that an arrangement should be made with the Ecclesiastical Commissioners whereby they should pay a certain sum to the Treasury, and that the salary of the judge should be paid out of the Consolidated Fund. The hon. and learned Member complains that the salary is to be fixed by the Lord Chancellor, but it is to be fixed by the Lord Chancellor with the concurrence of the Treasury. It is also necessary that there should be a provision for the revision of the salary according to the amount of business dealt with by the court. The hon. Gentleman seems to think that this provision is inserted by way of reference, in order to prevent the criticism of this House. It is nothing of the kind; it is necessary that there should be some provision for the revision of the salary according to the amount of the business of the court. The hon. Gentleman criticised the clause as to the Registrar. At present there is no qualification for the Registrar, and he is paid by fees. That is very objectionable. It is very much better that the fees should be accounted for, and the Registrar paid by salary. The provision as to the local limits of the jurisdiction of the court has been agreed to by those gentlemen who take a local interest in this Bill. I hope the House will feel that this is a measure which ought to have a Second Reading.

MR. HEDDERWICK; I cannot say I am entirely satisfied with the explanation of the Solicitor General. In the first place, this court, which is the Court of Chancery for the County Palatine of Durham, is a very small court. I do not

Mr. Samuel Evans.

go the length of saying that it is entirely useless, but in point of fact there is very little business done from one year's end to the other. It seems to me that the entire object of this Bill is to place the judge on the Consolidated Fund. At present he is paid by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and it is now proposed to give the Lord Chancellor power to give such a salary as he sees fit, and also to vary the salary in such a way as may involve a loss to the Consolidated Fund. The salary of the Registrar is also to be on the Consolidated Fund, and likewise the expenses incurred in the maintenance of the court. It may be true that a system of payment by fees is not a very good system, but at all events it has this advantage—that the Consolidated Fund is not a loser by it. As the business is very limited indeed, the probability is that the salary which will have to be paid will be very much in excess of the fees obtained in the court. But my objection to the Bill is not limited to mere details. I maintain that this is a tinkering little Bill, which merely touches the fringe of a much larger subject. In point of fact, the country is dotted over with Courts of First Instance which have no relation relation whatever to the Judicature Acts. If the Government really wanted to produce a useful measure, they would endeavour to bring all these isolated courts, with their peculiar procedure, into one form, which would relate them to the Judicature Acts, and so secure a uniform system throughout the country. For these reasons I oppose the Bill.

DR. CLARK: Eight or nine years ago we passed a Bill with a large number of clauses putting this Court under the High Court of Justice; and now we are asked to pass a Bill to amend that Act. The curious condition is that the Bill places a contingency on the Consolidated Fund. At the present time contingencies have to come before this House on the Estimates, and thus we can have a voice in regard to them. But when this contingency is placed on the Consolidated Fund the House can have no control over it, but it will be controlled by an officer in the House of Lords. That is a revolutionary practice. I object also to bringing on the reading of such a Bill by the mere lifting of the hat. There are some very important questions involved

in this Bill. In the form in which it stands the Ecclesiastical Commissioners may pay a lump sum or an annual sum, but there is no indication as to what the salary is to be. Probably the Government know, but are keeping back the facts from the House of Commons. I do not like the present association of the Treasury and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for any purpose of this kind. I think they are too friendly altogether towards each other, and that the Treasury is likely to do what will please their friends the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. I hope the House will not consent to read this Bill a second time until we have very adequate information from the Solicitor-General.

MR. CHANNING (Northampton, E.): It seems to me that we are fully entitled to have this Bill read a second time this day three months. Obviously it is meant to perpetuate a court which would be much better merged in the judicial system of the country, and to make a grant from the Treasury as a relief to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. It is a thoroughly unsound policy to keep up courts which are practically of very little use, and to draw on the Consolidated Fund for their maintenance. Moreover, we are making a fresh draft on the Treasury for the use of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners at a time when the Ecclesiastical Commissioners ought to be called upon to give relief to the tithe rent-charge owners. I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time this day three months.

MR. CALDWELL: I rise to second the motion. The first clause of the Bill introduces a novel position. Hitherto the salary has been paid by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, but the clause provides that it is in future to be paid out of the Consolidated Fund without any intervention of Parliament whatever. We ought to have some explanation from the Government as to the amount of salary the judge receives from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners at present, and as to how much it is proposed that the Ecclesiastical Commissioners should give in order to be relieved from that responsibility. It is hardly treating the House fairly that on such an important Bill no information is vouchsafed to us, and that its Second Reading should be moved without explanation. And when we are driven to ask an

explanation, none is given. We shall afford the Solicitor-General an opportunity of giving us full information. As to the Registrar, will the Solicitor-General tell us the amount of fees he gets at the present moment, how much business is done, and what salary it is proposed to give him? Although the business done is very little, the Registrar is to have the power to appoint a deputy—that is to say, having little to do he is to have a man to help him to do that little. In Clause 2 another altogether novel position is introduced. I always understood that when a judge was appointed to an important position he had a salary fixed until the end of his tenure of his office; but this salary is to be subject to review every five years, although it is not said that it is to be increased if the business increases, or diminished if the business diminishes. Then, it is altogether novel to put into an Act of Parliament a provision giving power to the Lord Chancellor to fix salaries. If the Bill is read a second time to-night, the Committee stage should be postponed for some time in order that the Solicitor-General may give the House fuller information.

Amendment proposed—

“To leave out the word ‘now,’ and at the end of the Question to add the words “upon this day three months.”—(*Mr. Channing.*)

Question proposed, “That the word ‘now’ stand part of the Question.”

***MR. CARVELL WILLIAMS** (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield): There are some things certain about this Bill, and some things quite uncertain. One thing seems to be certain, and that is that this change is to be effected solely between the Ecclesiastical Commissioners and the Treasury. As regards the Treasury, my view would be very much affected by which Party was in power. As regards the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, I know they are most excellent hands at driving a bargain in the interest of the Church, and I should be disinclined to place full trust in the Treasury for the purpose of checking them. Another thing certain is that the fees which have hitherto gone to support the court are now to be abolished and, at any rate, the Registrar is to be paid out of the Consolidated Fund, and it is left to the Lord Chancellor to determine what the amount of the salary is to be. It

Mr. Caldwell.

is quite possible that the motives which prompted the production of this Bill are perfectly innocent; but it is equally possible that some job is contemplated. I observe that there is no provision for placing before Parliament the results of the negotiation between the Lord Chancellor and the Treasury. If the Bill becomes law the whole thing passes beyond the control of Parliament, and the Lord Chancellor will be in the position of authority which should be vested in this House. We ought to have more information than is before us in regard to the reasons why this Bill has been brought in. Seeing the Ecclesiastical Commissioners derive very large revenues from that portion of the kingdom to which this court belongs, I think we are entitled to insist that adequate precautions should be taken against the easement of the Commissioners from their present responsibility. I submit that the Bill ought not to be read a second time to-night, but that we should have in our possession much more information than has been vouchsafed to us.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion): This Bill savours very strongly of a job. The Ecclesiastical Commissioners are to be relieved of a charge which they have hitherto paid, and the charges are to be placed on the Consolidated Fund. Having regard to the fact that the Treasury means a Conservative Government at the present time, and having regard also to the record of this particular Government in the way it has treated the Church so favourably, I feel strongly inclined to distrust these secret arrangements between the Government and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners. There is nothing to prevent the Lord Chancellor paying a thousand a year to the judge. We know that the Government of the day frequently finds extraordinary reasons for saying that some people are very badly treated, and for dipping their hands into the public pocket in order to pay their friends. There is no restriction or safeguard whatever in the Bill as to the amount of salaries, and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners may make the best bargain they can secretly with the officials of the Treasury. Another strong objection to the Bill is that the jurisdiction of the Local Court may be enlarged by a simple Order in Council. These

small courts ought really to be swept away altogether. There should be no court which is not uniform with the other courts in the country. It is the greatest inconvenience when parties living in other parts of the country have business before these courts, and do not know the special procedure in these courts, and how their rights are to be defended. They feel themselves very much as an Englishman who is obliged to go before the courts in Belgium and France.

It being midnight, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Thursday.

ROYAL NIGER COMPANY [CONSOLIDATED FUND].

Resolution reported—

"That it is expedient to authorise the issue, out of the Consolidated Fund, of sums not exceeding £865,000, and, for the purpose of providing money for such issue, the borrowing, by means of terminable annuities charged on and paid out of the moneys annually provided by Parliament for Foreign and Colonial Services, and, if those moneys are insufficient, out of the Consolidated Fund, of a sum not exceeding £820,000, for making payments to the Royal Niger Company, in consideration of the transfer to the Crown of the administrative powers of the said company, together with their treaty and other rights and property, and for meeting expenditure rendered necessary by such transfer."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Resolution read a second time.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): I must express my utter inability to understand the manner in which this Bill and this proposal are being rushed through the House. Yesterday evening we raised a short discussion on the question, and asked that the House should be supplied with Papers. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was kind enough to give a verbal statement of the case, which was very lucid and very clear, but which left us without any documentary evidence whatever on the matter. I ventured to suggest to the right hon. Gentleman that he should postpone the further consideration of the Resolution until the Papers were before the House. Well, the right hon. Gentleman met the suggestion, which also came from several other hon. Members, with a statement that "Papers relating to the subject would

be laid on the Table to-night"—meaning last night. When the right hon. Gentleman made that statement I myself and other hon. Members immediately got up and suggested that that was an additional reason why the Resolution should be postponed till to-day. When I made the suggestion I could not contemplate what has really occurred; for the right hon. Gentleman, not satisfied with bringing this Resolution before the Committee yesterday without Papers, now asks that the Resolution should be reported, not only without Papers, but in the face of his own definite promise that we should have the Papers. The Papers may be somewhere in the House, but I have gone to the Vote Office, and can find no trace of them there; and I have gone to the Table, and can find no trace of them there. It is quite possible that the right hon. Gentleman may not have been able to obtain the Papers—I do not blame him for that—but if he found himself unable to carry out his undertaking to the House, I think the right hon. Gentleman was called upon to postpone the Report of this Resolution until he was able to redeem his promise, and to lay the Papers before the House. I say that this is rushing a most important transaction through the House. Now, it is not my fault that I have to raise this question at this very unreasonable hour. The matter might have been elucidated yesterday, in the course of another hour's discussion; but the right hon. Gentleman, either from a certain perverseness of disposition or irritability of nerves, would not allow us to have that discussion, and, therefore, we are compelled to raise it at this inconvenient hour. The assumption of the government of thirty-five to forty millions of people is a scheme of the gravest and most momentous importance, and I do not see how any rational or impartial man can deny the proposition which is at the basis of our attitude and action in regard to this proposal. It is an assumption of responsibility, serious and grave enough to demand the most deliberate judgment of the House. How can it be said that we have deliberate action, when on two important stages the House is left absolutely without documentary evidence as to this proposal? I am compelled to form the best judgment I can on the statement of the right hon. Gentleman as reported in the newspapers, and I must say that

the statement is one calculated to excite very strange, if not sombre, reflection. Here let it be understood that I am not at all prejudging the question; I am not declaring against the policy of the Government in assuming the government of these territories from the hands of the Niger Company. I must say, indeed, that the policy of the Government in dethroning the administrative action of the company is more than justified, and does not come a moment too soon. The right hon. Gentleman passed a fine eulogium on the Chartered Company, but that eulogium was in strange contrast with some of the statements in the speech he himself made. What did he say of this Company? He said that it had assumed certain rights and imposed certain duties which were subjects of controversy with certain countries, especially with France. Although the right hon. Gentleman held that the Company was legally justified in imposing these duties, yet it was violating in spirit the Treaty of Berlin. What was the result? I wish the House to mark this. The result of the imposition of these duties, and the international illegality of which the right hon. Gentleman himself admitted the Chartered Company was guilty, was that it brought this country and France to the verge of a terrible and disastrous war.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Sir M. HICKS-BEACH, Bristol, W.) dissented.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: The right hon. Gentleman shakes his head; but I shall quote his own words:

"If the Niger Company had been allowed a free hand in its relations with the French, there would have been most grave danger of misunderstanding, and perhaps even of conflict, which might have led to a great and terrible war."

I am within the recollection of the House that if I did not give his exact words I rightly interpreted his words as meaning, that if the Chartered Company had not been held in check by the Imperial authority, it would have brought this country into a great and terrible war. I have a second observation to make on that statement. I say quite candidly, that it is to a large extent a justification of the step which the Imperial Government is taking as a necessary means of escape from a most perilous position.

Mr. T. P. O'Connor.

My second observation is, that this company is actually to be rewarded for having brought two great nations to the verge of what the right hon. Gentleman very properly called a great and terrible war, by what the right hon. Gentleman acknowledges to have been an abuse of its powers.

*SIR M. HICKS-BEACH: No, no.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: Oh, yes; the abuse of its powers. I must quote the right hon. Gentleman again.

*SIR M. HICKS-BEACH: What from?

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: From *The Times* newspaper:

"Although I believe they (meaning the duties) were found to be within the legal rights conferred on the company by its charter, they did infringe the spirit of the Act of Berlin, in respect of the navigation of the Niger."

Is not that a statement by the right hon. Gentleman himself that the Chartered Company did abuse its rights, and bring this country into conflict with France? So much in regard to the general question of the charter. I hope the House understands that my objection to the action of the right hon. Gentleman is mainly upon the manner in which he is dealing with so great and important a question. I say at once that I have had very little opportunity—the right hon. Gentleman has not supplied the House with the opportunity—of examining the details of this transaction. It is a transaction that seems to me to require a great deal of consideration; but, roughly, it amounts to this: The Niger Company had two branches of business—the one trading, the other administrative. The trading was profitable and the administrative branch was unprofitable. The proposal of the right hon. Gentleman is this, that this country should leave to the Niger Company the trading branch, which is profitable, and take over the administrative branch, which is a losing concern. I put it to any man of business, if any capitalist came to him and said, "Here is a business with two departments, one losing and one profitable; take you the losing part and leave me with the profitable part," would the capitalist be expected to pay him for taking away the losing part of the concern. That is my first criticism. I do not deny

that everyone is entitled to drive as hard a bargain as he can. Well, I will state my objections to this bargain. In the first place, the right hon. Gentleman is paying £150,000 for what he calls dislocation of business.

*SIR M. HICKS-BEACH: That includes compensation for land rights and mineral rights.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: What does the right hon. Gentleman mean by the dislocation of business? That requires explanation. Then he talks about land rights, and mineral rights. I would have thought that the right hon. Gentleman had been writing a prospectus for the City. "Those rights are of considerable extent, particularly in the Empire of Sokoto and Gando, and they exist under special treaties. It is reported that there are silver, tin, antimony, and other metals in those regions; and of course there is always the hope of gold." That is a most extraordinary statement for the right hon. Gentleman to make. In that spirit of genial optimism which hitherto, I thought, was confined to company promoters asking for the money of confiding people, he says that "there is always a hope of gold," and on that hope the right hon. Gentleman asked us to take the first steps towards voting this vast sum of money to the company. Well, there are several other transactions with this company which I have not been able to grasp. The right hon. Gentleman said that the company raised £250,000 on the customs duties, and that that sum is to be paid off by the Government. But, as I understand the reports of the company, it got back that £250,000 from the public at 5 per cent. interest. I find from the "Stock Exchange Year Book" that the council of the company reported that the £250,000 was a sum expended by the company, and that the Government had given its formal assent to the levying of duties in excess of those required for administrative purposes in order to pay this off. I find also that of this £250,000 £133,000 was set aside in August, 1889, as a distribution at 30 per cent. to the proprietors, and that the balance of £116,000 was retained by the company. This I interpret to mean that the company have got back the whole of the £250,000 already. Then I find that the large sum of £115,000 is to be paid for

steamers, jetties, warehouses, machinery, and plant; and £300,000 for what the right hon. Gentleman calls unexhausted improvements. These are not small things. The transaction itself is a very great transaction, and the assumption of this extraordinary amount of responsibility is a great transaction. For all these reasons I complain most strongly of the hurry with which the right hon. Gentleman is pushing the Bill through the House. In order to mark my sense of these proceedings, I beg to move that the sum of £820,000 be reduced by £200,000.

Amendment proposed—

"In line 6, to leave out '£820,000,' and insert £620,000."—(Mr. T. P. O'Connor.)

Question proposed, "That £820,000 stand part of the Resolution."

*SIR M. HICKS-BEACH: The hon. Gentleman complained last night in the most bitter language of my having failed to give the House any information on the subject of the Resolution which I moved. It now appears that the hon. Member was not in the House when I happened to deliver that speech.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: I said so.

*SIR M. HICKS-BEACH: And that he was entirely ignorant of all I said on the matter. He has now had the opportunity of referring to the newspapers, and has discovered that I explained to the House, as fully as I could, the whole circumstances of the case and the proposals of the Government in regard to the Niger Company. I refer to this because it is evident that the hon. Member has now acquainted himself, to some extent, with the facts of the case, and therefore has been able to discuss the statement I made. But even so, the hon. Member is a little premature, for really the speech he has delivered was a speech not appropriate to the Report on the Resolution, which is almost invariably a formal stage, but to the Second Reading of the Bill. When the Second Reading of the Bill comes on he will be in possession of the papers which I have promised, and will be far better able to deal with them than now. He said that I promised the papers last night, but that he was not able to obtain them. That is the case; but why? I found in the

course of the discussion that hon. Members desired to obtain certain papers which I had not supposed would be asked for, and therefore I delayed the issue of the papers which I had prepared for a day or so, in order that all the papers which hon. Members wanted should be in their possession. I never suggested for a moment that the papers would be in their possession before the Report on the Resolution. What I said was that they would be in their possession a sufficient length of time before the Second Reading of the Bill was proposed. I trust hon. Members will not feel it necessary to continue this discussion to-night. I do not at all blame the hon. Member for rising. He has made his speech now, and has expressed his opinion, and I trust that in a few days the House will be in possession of the Bill, and of the Papers, and will be far better able to form a judgment on the whole case than now.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): The discussion of yesterday, and so far as it has gone to-night, must have brought home to the mind of the right hon. Gentleman the conviction that he has set about this task in a wrong fashion. It is a very large question, and I hold that in bringing forward a motion like this, which undoubtedly commits the House not only to the principle of the Bill, but substantially to the amount of compensation to be given to the company, the House ought to have had in its hands a fair and full statement of the facts, and of the affairs of the company, and of the alleged profits and assets on which the House is to be asked to provide these funds. I know that the right hon. Gentleman made, in some respects, a very clear statement, but I defy any hon. Member to take into his mind adequately a complicated statement of figures such as that made by the right hon. Gentleman yesterday; and even if it were possible, for the purposes of discussion, to remember and to take notes, it very soon became apparent, in the course of the discussion, that there were many facts wanting, and a vast deal of information which is absolutely essential to be had before we arrive at a decision as to the amount of money to be paid—particularly in reference to this question of stock. One of the propositions to which the House has been asked to agree is to take

over a debt of £250,000 five per cent. inscribed stock, and in order to deal with that debt, we are to raise a sum of £300,000 and pay it off at a premium of 20 per cent. This debt was raised by the company in 1888, and, so far as I can understand from the only sources of information at our disposal, it was divided into two parts. The money obtained by the company was not spent in administration, but was allowed to be used by the company in the way of re-imbursement of alleged payments that had been made in previous years. £133,000 was distributed at the rate of 30 per cent. to all the shareholders, and £116,000 was retained in the hands of the company, which they have to this day. And now, as part of the payment, this country is to take over the whole of the debt of £250,000, thus leaving the proceeds in the hands of the shareholders of the company. I find from the "Stock Exchange Year Book" that the latest price of this stock is 100. But I would like very much to see the quotation of this stock next week, the moment it is known that the Chancellor of the Exchequer is going to take over the 5 per cent. stock on the security of the credit of this country, and that it is to be redeemed immediately at 120. I need not say that that stock will jump up immediately. We ought to have some information as to who are the gentlemen who get the additional advantage of the rise of this stock in the market. I also maintain that some information ought to be given as to whether any effort was made to get hold of this stock, which was selling at par, before this resolution was introduced. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said just now, when he alluded to the sum of £300,000 for unexhausted improvements, that that sum did not include, as I understood him, either the lands on the banks of the Niger or the alleged mineral rights. As I read his speech, I took it that these unexhausted improvements did include the lands and a number of alleged mineral rights. If that sum does not include the land and minerals, I should like to know what the unexhausted improvements are; for all the improvements visible to the naked eye, and which are purchased for a large sum by the Government, are the jetties, warehouses, machinery, and plant. And these are to be purchased at a valuation. Who made the valuation is another

Sir M. Hicks-Beach.

question. What are the unexhausted improvements ?

SIR M. HICKS-BEACH : The unexhausted improvements are, the moneys expended by the company out of trade profits in developing the territory and in administrative work, and applied, beyond the sums raised through customs duties which it was allowed to raise, for the purposes of administration—the benefit of which, owing to the revocation of the charter, it will never be able to receive.

MR. DILLON : We know what is going to be done, but why is the company, which in 1888 got a sum of £250,000 to cover these obligations, to get another sum ?

***SIR M. HICKS-BEACH :** The money was expended by the company in acquiring treaties and other rights and privileges.

MR. DILLON : That I quite understand, but we must examine the profits of the company. They have distributed a bonus of 30 per cent. to the shareholders. In addition to that there are trade profits, and they hold £116,000 in their hands. For the last six years they have paid 6 per cent. and $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. in the last two years. Their stock in the market, in spite of the alleged losses, stands at nearly 100 per cent premium. Now we are told that they are to be recouped for losses incurred by transferring sums from their trading profits to administrative expenses. The whole capital of the company is about £500,000 including debentures, and they are to get a sum of £300,000 altogether apart from trade profits, which will enable them to distribute 70 per cent. as a bonus to the shareholders. I believe that they would be able to return to their shareholders nearly the whole of their paid-up capital, and go on paying a good percentage on their capital as if it were still paid up. It seems to me that the price to be paid the company is enormous.

***SIR M. HICKS-BEACH :** The hon. Gentleman entirely forgets that by this change the company will lose that trade monopoly which has enabled them to make these large trading profits, and which they will not be able to make in future.

MR. DILLON : I say that the statements of the Chancellor of the Exchequer require to be proved. I noticed that in the newspapers this morning there is the very greatest possible doubt in the public mind of this country as to this transaction, and there is a great body of opinion that the Niger Company after this transaction is over will have as good a trading business as formerly. They have got a long start of possible competitors, and it is perfectly possible that after having made many losses they will be in a stronger position than ever for trading purposes. I think it must be generally felt that it would have been better to have had a full Debate on the Resolution with the Papers before the House, and certainly the attempt to rush the early stages of the Bill will not have the effect of shortening the discussion.

MR. DALZIEL : The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer has made a statement just now that in future the arrangement carried out with the company would materially affect their trading profits. I wonder if the right hon. Gentleman has read the circular issued this morning to the shareholders, in which it is stated that the revocation of the charter would not affect the legal position of the company, and that in expectation of the present proposal careful precautions had been taken that the contracts and the corporate existence of the company should depend, not on the charter, but on their earlier registration as a company under the Limited Liability Act. Contracts have been made right up to date which will give them a certain monopoly for years to come. They have a monopoly on the Niger at this moment, and their monopoly is going to continue. There is one other point which I regard as of great importance. It is reported to-day that this company, in view of the proposals of the Government, have been steadily and persistently buying up certain lands which the Government is not taking over, and which will give them practically as big a monopoly as ever.

***SIR M. HICKS-BEACH :** I have made inquiries as to that statement from Sir George Goldie, and he indignantly denies that there is the slightest truth in it.

MR. DALZIEL : No one is more glad to hear that statement than I am. I can

only regret that the right hon. Gentleman was not in a position to deny the report yesterday, because it was stated on the authority of correspondence from men on the spot. We must take Sir George Goldie's statement, of course. But we have practically no reliable evidence as to the basis on which the valuations have been made; nor have we the balance-sheets of the company. It seems to me that before this proposal goes much further we should have the balance-sheets of the company, especially when it is said that it is a losing concern. It is said that there are mineral rights which are to be transferred to the Government. These mineral rights have been in existence for many years, and it is not likely that the Niger Company would hand them over if they were worth anything. Besides, the company are to get 50 per cent. of all we make out of these mineral rights for a long term of years, while we are to take all the risks. That is a very good deal for the company.

*MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): The Stock Exchange is said to be a very good political barometer. The right hon. Gentleman, if he consults the lists, will find that the Niger Company's shares, instead of falling, have gone up from £10 to £17 and £18, which is double their value. And I cannot but think that they will continue to go up when there is such a splendid prospect before the shareholders in view of the payment of this £865,000 which the Government is going

to make. Besides, the company have entered into a long lease which will secure a monopoly for many years to come. I should like to know what evidence there is that there are really valuable mineral rights in the territory.

MR. T. P. O'CONNOR: The right hon. Gentleman has made the *amende*, and I will withdraw the motion I have made.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Resolution agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer and Mr. Brodrick.

ROYAL NIGER COMPANY BILL.

"To make provision for certain payments to be made in connection with the revocation of the charter of the Royal Niger Company," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 260.]

COTTAGE HOMES BILL.

Special Report from the Select Committee brought up, and read.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 261.]

House adjourned at ten minutes before One of the clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 5th July 1899.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

KENSINGTON AND NOTTING HILL
ELECTRIC LIGHTING BILL.

Lords Amendments considered, and agreed to.

BIRMINGHAM, NORTH WARWICK-
SHIRE, AND STRATFORD-UPON-
AVON RAILWAY BILL [Lords].

Read a second time, and committed.

GREAT EASTERN RAILWAY (GENERAL
POWERS) BILL [Lords].

To be read a second time upon Monday next.

NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE RAILWAY
BILL [Lords].

Read a second time, and committed.

MERSEY DOCKS AND HARBOUR
BOARD (FINANCE) BILL [Lords]
[STAMP DUTIES].

Considered in Committee :—

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, that the Board may from time to time enter into agreements with the Commissioners of Inland Revenue, if the Commissioners in their discretion think proper, for the payment to the Commissioners, by way of composition of Stamp Duty on transfers of any stocks, of such a sum or sums as may from time to time be agreed between the Board and the Commissioners, and in consideration of such payment transfers of the stock in respect of which such composition has been paid shall be exempt from Stamp Duty.—(*Dr. Farquharson.*)

Resolution to be reported to-morrow.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING PROVISIONAL
ORDER BILL (No. 9) [Lords].

Reported, without Amendment [Provisional Order confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time to-morrow.

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MERSEY DOCKS AND HARBOUR
BOARD (PILOTAGE) BILL [Lords].

Reported, with Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table.

TRANSVAAL MORTGAGE, LOAN, AND
FINANCE COMPANY BILL [Lords].

Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time.

PETITION.

BOARD OF EDUCATION BILL.

Petition from Walsall, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

COMPANIES ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Walsall, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS BILL.

Petition from Walsall, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

MONEY-LENDING BILL.

Petition from Walsall, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE
(SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Campbelltown, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON
SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour;—From Gorton, Bootle, Liverpool, Leigh and Chertsey; to lie upon the Table.

TITHE RENT-CHARGE (RATES) BILL.

Petition from Walsall, against; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

SUPERANNUATIONS.

Copy presented,—of Treasury Minute, dated 26th June, 1899, declaring that for the due and efficient discharge of the duties of the post of Second Assistant to the Chief Crown Solicitor, Ireland, professional or other peculiar qualifications

not ordinarily to be acquired in the Public Service are requisite [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION ACT, 1899.

Copies presented, — of Minutes sanctioning the Subjects to be taught under Clause 8 of the Act for the following Counties, etc.:—

County Borough of Limerick (Sixth Minute), dated 9th March, 1899 ;

County Borough of Limerick (Seventh Minute), dated 8th April, 1899 ;

County Borough of South Shields (Third Minute), dated 25th May, 1899 ;

County of Salop (Fourth Minute), dated 7th June, 1899 ;

County of Rutland (Fourth Minute) dated 16th June, 1899 ;

County of Worcester (Fifth Minute), dated 15th March, 1899

[by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

TRAMWAYS ORDERS CONFIRMATION (NO. 2) BILL.

Copy ordered, of "Memorandum stating the nature of the Proposals contained in the Provisional Orders included in the Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill."—(*Mr. Ritchie*).

Copy presented accordingly ; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 262.)

TRAMWAYS ORDERS CONFIRMATION (NO. 3) BILL.

Copy ordered, "of Memorandum stating the nature of the Proposals contained in the Provisional Orders included in the Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 3) Bill."—(*Mr. Ritchie*).

Copy presented accordingly ; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. (No. 263.)

ISOLATION HOSPITALS (AMENDMENT) BILL (Lords).

Read the first time ; to be read a second time upon Friday, and to be printed. [Bill 261.]

AGRICULTURAL AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION (IRELAND) BILL.

SECOND READING.

Order for Second reading read.

Motion made and question proposed : "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. G. W. Balfour*.)

*SIR CHAS. DILKE (Gloucester, Forest of Dean) : Those of us who are strong Home Rulers and would give the Irish people, through their elected representatives, the power of dealing with questions of this kind for themselves by legislative or administrative action, are placed in a certain difficulty by Bills of this nature—such a difficulty as would also arise in connection with a proposal to establish a Roman Catholic University in Ireland by a vote of this House. The only general observation I will allow myself to make in regard to the general nature of the Bill, which undoubtedly mainly concerns the Irish representatives, is that it seems to be part of the policy which has been described as "killing Home Rule by kindness," but which, unless it is carefully watched, may lead to schemes for "killing Home Rule by jobbery." But the particular objection I have to the Bill is one which is common to several Measures which have from time to time been proposed in this House, although not one has passed during the last five or six years. It is that it adds to the number of Ministers having seats in this House by the creation of a vice-president who will be the Parliamentary head of the new Department. The view I entertain on this point is not perhaps a very popular one. But I do believe that we have far too many Parliamentary Departments at present. The ideal at which we ought to aim is a smaller number of Ministers with great powers and large salaries—persons who would hold a position of considerable importance in the State and form a small governing Cabinet, rather than the multiplication of Parliamentary Departments with less powerful Ministers, who are not able to make their views prevail with their colleagues. I am afraid that the ideal of many hon. Members is exactly the opposite, and while resisting the payment of Members—the principle of which is peculiarly applicable to the case of Ireland, they look forward to the time when almost every British Member would be at the head of some Department administering his own particular hobby. We have only to look at some of the existing Departments in order to realise the difference between the two ideals. We have three hard-working Members in this House representing the Admiralty, and two the War Office, while in the other

House there are also three gentlemen representing these Departments. But these gentlemen are doing administrative work of a kind which could be far better done by permanent officials under the general control of a Parliamentary head. We are face to face with this difficulty. If each time a new complicated problem of modern society comes up to be dealt with you are to create a fresh Parliamentary Minister, you will pack this House with Ministers having no real power either with their colleagues or with Parliament, and they will be doing less efficiently work which could be better done by permanent officials. This matter was discussed a few years ago in a very interesting debate, on which occasion Lord Randolph Churchill, in his last important speech, laid down the principle, which was concurred in by the then Home Secretary, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Fife, that new departments ought not to be multiplied. The noble Lord declared that the country was over-ridden with new Ministries, and he pointed out how preferable was the system under which great Ministers with real power as Members of the Cabinet directed the general political concerns of the State and gave a general impulsion to their particular departments, leaving the mere departmental work to be carried on by permanent officials. We have already in this country far more political Ministers than any other country in the world. There is no country, however centralised its administration may be, and however much it interferes with the affairs of the people, which has anything like the number of Parliamentary Ministers that we have already, and yet this number is continually increasing. The other day I asked the Leader of the House to give a return of the number of Ministers in different countries, but he declined on the ground that the circumstances of this country were different from other countries; but I contend that the circumstances of this country are in favour of a smaller number of Ministers than the number in other countries. Some years ago there was a Committee which inquired into this matter and prepared a return. There is a general impression that the number of what may be called place-men in this House is decreasing. That is true if you count the sinecure offices and the offices connected with the Army and Navy, but the Report of

the Committee shows that there was a far smaller number of men holding political office at that time than is now the case. They laid down the sound principle that it is the duty of the Parliamentary head of a department not to work the department himself, but to see that it is worked. Not only have we largely increased the number of Parliamentary Ministers, but we have had proposals, more or less popular, for creating new Ministries for Justice, Commerce, Health, and Labour, and unless we check it we shall soon reach the ideal which some hon. Members appear to have in their minds. While I strongly entertain these views, I believe that this Bill is one which the Irish Members desire to pass, and I, of course, yield to that view. One point I object to. This new Vice-President is to have a seat in Parliament, but he is not to vacate his seat when appointed. The words are not very clear, but I think there can be no doubt as to the meaning. This is a matter which has been frequently brought before Parliament, but the proposal that Members on accepting office should not vacate their seats has never met with approval. The last division taken on it was in 1869, when Lord Bury had moved for leave to bring in a Bill to abolish the system of vacating seats on taking office. Mr. Gladstone made a powerful speech against that motion, and the unusual course was taken of rejecting the Bill on the motion for leave to introduce it. What were the arguments which then met with the approval of the House? The main one used appears to be specially applicable to the case of Ireland and her peculiar Parliamentary position. It is a rather delicate matter to speak on, but we all probably have certain cases in our minds which were then fresh in the mind of Mr. Gladstone. It was pointed out, in that debate, that it was undesirable to give the slightest opening to political or Parliamentary treachery, and that a Member elected as a Nationalist Member should not be bought by the offer of office, when he did not dare to face his constituents, because he was acting in defiance of their opinions. This particular provision increases my general objection to the measure, but as the Amendment which I have on the Paper might tend to limit the discussion I will not propose it, but will content myself with having made a protest, which I frankly admit is less applicable to the case of Ireland.

*MR. DRAGE (Derby): I rise to support this Bill, and I protest at the outset against the innuendo of the right hon. Baronet, who last spoke, that it has been introduced by the Government in order to kill Home Rule by kindness. It is rather brought in by the Government in answer to the demands which have come from Dublin, Belfast, Waterford, and indeed from every portion of Ireland, a demand made by Protestants and Roman Catholics, and I support the Bill because it is a practical recognition of one of the most remarkable movements which the present century has witnessed in Ireland, I mean the movement initiated by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Dublin. I am sure we all regret the absence of the right hon. Gentleman on the present occasion. If there is one reason why we do not regret it as much as we otherwise should, it is because we can say in his absence some of the things it would be impossible for us to say if he were here, with regard to the self-denial and self-sacrifice with which he laid the foundation of this remarkable movement, which has united men of all parties and all creeds in Ireland. In the report of the Recess Committee he set forth very clearly the difficulties which surround the labour movement in Ireland at the present time. He showed that Ireland was a poor country, without manufactures, except shipbuilding and linen in the North, and brewing and distilling in Dublin, that the soil was imperfectly tilled, and that the population was without industrial habits or technical skill. He referred to the restrictions imposed by the English Parliament on Irish manufactures, and I think there is nothing causes one greater pain than the contemplation of the action of Parliament in that direction last century, or the action in the present century of the English Treasury in reference to the limitations it placed on the National Board of Education, which seemed to have anticipated the modern development of social and technical education in Europe by something like half-a-century. Ireland has not only had these great difficulties to contend with, but it has also had to face practically unlimited foreign competition. This Bill is the more remarkable because it seems likely to introduce into the system of Great Britain some of those institutions which have done such wonders for agriculture and technical educa-

tion in Denmark and Wurtemberg. It is interesting to notice that in Denmark, at the end of the last century, the population was poorer and in a more miserable condition than the population of any other country in Europe, whereas at the present day the national wealth of Denmark, in proportion to the population, is second only to that of Great Britain. This remarkable change is due to the organisation of industry by co-operation, the representation of industry in the Government, and also to the increased intelligence of the people of Denmark, and those who have had to deal with the Irish people are confident that with the facilities for technical instruction which this Bill would afford, they would soon rival the people of Denmark in respect to their intelligence and industry. The one item that Denmark lacks is provided by Wurtemberg, namely the institution of "people's banks," and that the right hon. gentleman has successfully introduced into the West of Ireland. What was the problem which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Dublin set before him? It was to prepare the ground for legislation, to unite all parties in Ireland, and to foster the independence of the Irish people, which had been so long undermined by the lamentable system of doles of money from the public treasury, so badly expended in many cases, in the west of Ireland, by means of the organisation of agriculture on co-operative principles. Why is it that we on this side of the House so cordially congratulate the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary upon the efforts he is making to push forward this measure, and why do we urge him to carry it through? It is because we believe it to be based on the foundation of a self-reliant people. A people able to deal with agriculture in its modern forms is already there. Hon. Members on this side of the House are, perhaps, not so familiar as hon. Members opposite with the work that has been done during the last five years by the Irish Agricultural Organization Society. The problem which they have set themselves, and which they must sooner or later solve, is this: the transition of agriculture from production on a small scale to production on a large scale, co-operation on a large scale, the establishment of creameries and the sale of their produce on co-operative principles, and the

provision of machinery, tools, seeds, and manures on a large scale, in order that producers may have the benefit of them at small cost to themselves. All this has been done. But there are four items on the programme which need the help which the right hon. Gentleman is going to give in the present measure—viz., the introduction of home industries, the promotion of technical education, the circulation of good information, and the establishment of a system of co-operative credit and co-operative purchase in Ireland. These are all items in the programme of the Member for South Dublin which can only be carried to a successful issue if the present Bill is passed into law. I know that some objections may be urged against the Bill, but if it is passed into law I contend that it will give the Irish farmers an enormous advantage over the agriculturists of England. It may be regretted that the Congested Districts Board has not been adopted as the nucleus of this new department, that no provision is made for transport and cold storage as recommended by the Recess Committee—

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. G. W. BALFOUR, Leeds Central): Yes, there is.

*MR. DRAGE: Well, that had escaped my notice. I hope hon. Members opposite will not, on account of the regrets which they may feel at any omissions, or at what they may consider the unsatisfactory financial provisions of the Bill, stand in the way of its passage through the House. I believe it is a Bill fraught with the utmost benefit to Ireland, and one which will certainly, as far as agriculture is concerned, place Ireland at very great advantage over the agriculturists of England. Before I sit down I should like to offer my warmest congratulations to the Chief Secretary on his success in carrying this Bill to its present stage, and to express the hope, which I am sure is shared by every man on these benches, that he will leave no stone unturned to carry it through all its stages. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean, in what I think was a mischievous hint, implied that this is part of the policy of killing Home Rule by kindness. I submit to the House, and especially to hon. Gentlemen opposite, that the Bill has been introduced in response to appeals

made to the Government from every part of Ireland. If the right hon. Gentleman had not brought the Bill forward, there are many Members on this side who would have left no stone unturned to induce the Government to take action in the matter, and, if I may once more appeal to hon. Gentlemen opposite, it would be to ask them to remember the state of Ireland at the present time, to remember that the work of the organisation of Irish agriculture and industry which has been so successfully begun is only wanting this necessary help to carry it to a triumphant issue, and therefore I ask them to lay aside their political differences, and help us on this side, who are honestly trying our best to improve the condition of the poor of Ireland—I ask them to lay aside their differences and join with us in forwarding this measure, which I honestly believe is fraught with the utmost benefit to the people of Ireland.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): It was interesting to me to hear the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean speaking here, as he announced, as a Home Ruler, and then proceeding to argue this point about Ministerial representation in this House entirely from the English point of view. There was not a single argument against putting a member of this department in this House which he did not draw from the experience of England. He left Ireland entirely out of consideration. Possibly there are too many Ministers in this House, but that is not the fault of Irish representation. The Chief Secretary occupies an extraordinary position. He is a regular Poohbah. He is President of the Local Government Board, he is President of the Board of Works, and he is president of half a dozen of the different boards in Ireland. It is absurd to think that in the creation of a Government Department, such as I hope this will be, enormous good will not come to Ireland from the presence here of a Minister directly responsible for the work of that office. As to the vacation of a seat by a Minister on accepting office, I am inclined to agree with the right hon. Gentleman that the principle of not vacating is a vicious one; but I put that aside as a matter which can be dealt with elsewhere. The right hon. Gentleman seems to be oppressed with the fear of the policy of killing Home Rule with kindness. I do not care

a row of pins about the motives of right hon. Gentlemen opposite. If they propose a measure for the good of the Irish people I shall support them, and as to the fear that Home Rule will be killed with kindness, I think it comes very badly from anyone who has a genuine faith in the national movement. The more prosperous, the better educated you make the people of Ireland, the more united and the more irresistible will be the national movement, and the view that this measure is objectionable because it springs from a desire to undermine the Home Rule Movement has no influence with me. I rise for the purpose of giving to this measure, speaking of it broadly, a hearty and thorough support, and to urge upon the Government most earnestly to see that it is passed into law this session. I do not mean that I pin myself to every detail of this Bill, or that I am in any degree satisfied with its financial aspect. Those who know anything about the financial relations of the two countries know how objectionable many of the financial proposals of this Bill are. But I believe there is not a defect in the measure which cannot be dealt with adequately in Committee, and the principle underlying this Bill and the main provisions have my cordial approval. I support this Bill for four main reasons. First, I regard it as a measure introduced in obedience to a popular demand from the Irish people of all classes and all parties. Secondly, I regard it as in the main satisfying that demand, and as having received practically, indeed I may say the unanimous support of public opinion in Ireland in regard to its main provisions. Thirdly, I regard a measure of this kind as absolutely essential to the future of Ireland if she is not to be hopelessly handicapped in her competition with other countries. Fourthly, I regard it as a measure drawn on broad democratic lines, and an enormous advance in the direction of popular self-government of Ireland, and as embodying a principle which must have an enormous influence on those centralised and irresponsible institutions which have been the ruin of Ireland in the past. Is it true that this measure has been introduced in obedience to a public demand? The hon. Gentleman the Member for Derby is, I think, correct in tracing the origin of this proposal to the Recess Committee, and I must be allowed to express my deep regret

that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Dublin, who was mainly responsible for getting that Committee together, is unable to be present to witness the fruition of his labours, and especially through such unfortunate circumstances. The Recess Committee was composed of the most experienced men in Ireland on this subject. It is true that the hon. Member for East Mayo and some of his friends declined to act on the Committee, but some gentlemen holding similar views did serve, and it is absolutely true to say in these circumstances that every shade of political thought in Ireland was represented. This body instituted an exhaustive inquiry into agricultural industries and technical education in Ireland, and the effect of foreign competition, and, after an extended inquiry abroad, it recommended a scheme which, in many respects, was somewhat similar to the scheme of this Bill. That recommendation was discussed all over Ireland, and I have no recollection of any public bodies condemning the report, but I know that an overwhelming majority of them, including chambers of commerce, all the corporations of the country, and numberless boards of guardians, unanimously supported the recommendations of the Recess Committee. The result of that was that two years ago the Chief Secretary introduced a Bill to meet that demand. That Bill failed, and it failed because it did not meet some of the essential portions of the demand. I do not blame the right hon. Gentleman for it. One of the things we asked for was that the elective principle should be recognised in the measure. The Chief Secretary was in a great difficulty, because he had practically no constituency to go to. But the great measure of Local Government last year created a constituency, and from that constituency the right hon. Gentleman, I am happy to say, has been able to draw an effective elective feature in this Bill. Has this Bill received the sanction of public opinion in Ireland? What are the facts? It has been discussed widely by nearly all the public bodies in the country. The other day a conference of chambers of commerce from all the great cities of Ireland was held in Dublin, and while they recommended amendment of details, they unanimously approved the main features of the Bill, and urged the Government to pass it into law this session, whilst no

Mr. John Redmond.

single municipality in Ireland has declared against it. I have received an enormous number of requisitions from boards of guardians asking me to be in my place to-day to support this measure. No public body, large or small, important or insignificant, has passed a resolution against this measure. In addition to that, the press of the country has been almost unanimous. In the face of these facts I think I am justified in saying that public opinion in Ireland is unanimous in support of the Second Reading of this Bill. If that be so, I say it would be a monstrous hardship if a Bill so introduced, in obedience to public demand, and supported, as I have shown, by practically unanimous public opinion, were to be endangered by any action taken in this House at this stage. As to the necessity for such a Bill, it is not necessary for me to speak of Ireland as a poor country, as a country which practically has no manufactures. Ireland depends, broadly speaking, upon its agriculture. Admittedly, the soil of Ireland is badly tilled, the area of the land under cultivation is diminishing, her population has gone down, and practically there is no system whatever of agricultural or technical education, and practically no aid whatever is given by the State for these purposes. If the same amount of money were spent on agriculture in Ireland as is spent in Denmark at the present time, in proportion to her population, you would have to spend £230,000; and if the same amount were spent on industries and agriculture, in proportion to population, as is spent in Switzerland, you would have a sum of £2,000,000 a year spent for those purposes. This Bill only proposes to allocate a very small amount, and grave will be the responsibility of any man who delays for a single year a remedy for the appalling state of things which exists at the present moment. This Bill proposes to establish in Ireland for the first time a democratic board, two-thirds elected by the County Councils of Ireland, and one-third nominated by the Government, which board will have absolute control of the expenditure of this money, and if the money is not expended in any year, it will accumulate from year to year, and none of it can be spent by the department without the concurrence of this board. Some people have spoken of this as another Castle board. What does this Bill do? It very largely disestablishes

several Castle boards. It takes away from a number of these Castle boards a large portion of their powers, and it transfers to the elected authority the control now exercised by these Castle boards in some matters, and it transfers absolutely the control over science and art now exercised by South Kensington. I was reading this morning a summary of the Bill. This summary is as follows:—

“It introduces a completely new departure into Irish administration—a machinery of government for developing the agricultural and industrial resources of the country. This machinery is so constructed, after careful study, as to possess all the advantages of the most approved State department of the kind on the Continent, and to remove from Ireland at last the heaviest handicap under which she has laboured in the struggle with her foreign competitors. The Bill introduces the representative principle into economic administration; it creates elective councils of the classes whom its work concerns, to whom the Department must come for advice, and elective boards who are given the power of the purse. It brings over and places under an Irish authority all the powers that are now exercised in Ireland by the Science and Art Department of South Kensington. It provides for the establishment in Ireland of a comprehensive system of technical education and for the endowment of scientific research as applied to agriculture and industry. It provides the State, under the direction of the people, with the means of stimulating our agricultural and industrial production in every form, and defending and pushing our products in the markets of the world. It entitles the Government to take up the grievances of traders and farmers against the railway companies, and appear on their behalf before the Railway Commission. It gives power to the department, in connection with the county councils, to undertake schemes for reforesting the country, for reclaiming its waste lands, for developing its inland fisheries, for laying down its disused oyster beds, as France, who learned oyster culture from Ireland, has laid hers down within the last thirty years. It is, in many respects, a supplement to the County Councils Act, and just the measure which is needed to give these new bodies substance instead of shadow to work upon.”

That is not an exaggerated summary of the provisions of this Bill. It is a correct summary, and if that is so I am justified in regarding this as a measure based on democratic lines. As to the financial aspect of the Bill, the defect we see is that any of this money is drawn from Irish sources. We base our demand that it should all come from Imperial sources upon the case we make as to Irish financial relations. This is not, perhaps, the best opportunity for discussing that question. I have asked myself whether

if we accept the Bill as it stands we shall weaken our position with regard to the general financial question in the future. I believe this Bill will give us a platform from which in the future we shall be even better able to argue that question. The money provided by this Bill is only to enable a beginning to be made; no one suggests it will be sufficient for the future. There are two motions before the House, one for the Second Reading of the Bill, the other to refer the Bill to a Grand Committee. In my opinion it would be a great misfortune if we occupied the whole of the sitting discussing the Second Reading, and left no time to discuss the second question. My suggestion is that the principle of the Second Reading should be discussed for two or three hours, and then the House should consider whether the measure ought to be referred to a Grand Committee. We certainly ought to do nothing which can afford an excuse to Ministers to withdraw the Bill. It is, perhaps, just as well that the views of an Irish Nationalist Member should be heard in support of the Bill.

MR. WOLFF (Belfast, E.): I do not propose to say anything with regard to the details of the Bill, but, with regard to technical education, I think this is the first step that has been taken to give Ireland the advantage of competing on equal terms with the manufacturers of other countries. The hon. Member for Waterford says there are no manufacturing industries in Ireland, but certainly in the North there are some very large ones; but that is no reason why the manufactures of Ireland should not be very much increased, and there is no reason why districts like Waterford should not do the same as we have done in the North, and a Bill which will encourage these matters by technical education in Ireland is one which will be supported by every Irish Member in the House. Although there are many details which will have to be carefully considered in Committee, I certainly agree with the principle. In my opinion it would be more satisfactory to have two experts on this Board—one to look after technical education and the other agriculture. With regard to technical education you cannot engage in that until you build your institute, and I see no power in this Bill under which that expense can be incurred.

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MR. G. W. BALFOUR: You have power to borrow.

MR. WOLFF: Yes, we may have power to borrow, but that is not the way in which this matter ought to be carried out. Then I do not see what the Board of Technical Education has to do except to advise the Chief Secretary when he seeks its advice. I think under those circumstances the Board might be done without. But, of course, all these matters are matters for the Committee, and I shall not detain the House by discussing them. I will only say I heartily concur with what has fallen from both sides of the House so far, and I look forward to the passing of what I consider is the best Bill, so far as Ireland is concerned, that has been introduced for many years past.

SIR THOS. ESMONDE (Kerry, W.): I think the treatment of this Bill, on the whole, has been somewhat unfortunate, having regard to the importance of the measure. It would have been more in accord with tradition if the Irish Members had had some instruction with regard to it. But, although the manner of its introduction may not be considered satisfactory, at the same time I am one of those who think it should pass into law with as little delay as possible. I am quite sure that the Chief Secretary is also anxious that it may become law. Speaking broadly of the measure, I approve the principle, but I am not tied to the details, and I think that in Committee we may be able to effect such amendments as would seem to be desirable. I would suggest to the right hon. Gentleman whether, having regard to the peculiar composition of the Technical Education Board, Sub-section 3, Clause 1, might not be modified. The money required for this scheme is to be taken from the fund for national education, and is to be replaced from another source. I should like to see the allocation of that money retained as it is at present, so that the teachers of Ireland should have their interests safeguarded. Of course, it is well known that the Bill is wanted. Our agriculture is in a deplorable state, and although the amount of assistance given by this Bill is not so much as we should like, it is a step in the right direction, and when we want further amounts we shall get them. One fortunate

feature of the Bill is the additional power it gives to the county councils, thus recognising the right of Irishmen to govern their own affairs. The Bill is a recognition of the claim for Irish management of Irish affairs, and an admission that the people best qualified to know the needs of Ireland are the people living in the country and practically concerned in the working out of the administration. It is a very important thing that the staple industry in Ireland should have the recognition and assistance of Government. As far as the Bill lays down a framework for the development of agricultural and technical instruction, it affords very important and valuable service, and when the county councils understand the working of the measure and how to work it to the best possible advantage, it will be productive of enormous good to the country. On the question of finance, I naturally should like to see more money given to Ireland, but at the same time £168,000 is worth having, and now that it is promised I hope we shall secure it. It does not matter where the money comes from so long as we get it. The main point is that we should have the administration of the money. An important consideration is that by the passage of this Bill we shall clear the way for other legislation for Ireland. It is now practically an admitted principle that each session there ought to be an Irish Bill, and if this Bill is passed this session there is no reason why next session a Bill should not be brought in to deal with some other pressing question in Ireland. This Bill will be of great advantage to my constituents, who are very much interested in the fishing industry, for, although the Congested Districts Board have done us great service, they have not been able to do all that was required. The people of the North of Ireland, who have great interest in the passing of the Bill, are wrong in supposing they have a greater interest than have the people of the South; the interests are identical. But I, as a southern member, am glad to support the Bill if only as an assurance that we are not so irrevocably hostile to the North as some people seem to imagine, and that we realise that living in the same country we have very much the same interests. It would be an advantage if the North and South pulled together more than they have done hitherto. I

hope the Bill will be read a second time this afternoon and referred to a Committee, as that, I believe, is the only chance we have of securing its passage this session.

COL. SAUNDERSON (Armagh, North): I rise to urge upon Her Majesty's Government, in the name of the party with whom I act, and also on this occasion in the name of the majority of hon. Gentlemen opposite, the necessity of passing this Bill this session. If the measure is not passed into law the effect will be disastrous, as the Bill has been anxiously looked for, and embodies principles which have led to its universal acceptance by all classes and creeds in Ireland. It gives to Ireland what she really wants to enable her to compete successfully with any other civilised nation in the world. All that the Irish require to achieve that object is instruction. I am happy that on this occasion no burning questions have been introduced, but whether a man is a Home Ruler or a Unionist he likes good butter, he likes to be taught how to pack eggs and how to make bacon, and the proper way to make machinery. In matters of technical instruction and work the Irish are particularly adaptable to learn and succeed, and if this instruction is carried out all over the country, in a very short time Ireland will prove conclusively that she can compare favourably with any other nation in the world. The only thing I regret with regard to the financial part of the Bill is that the whole of the money does not come from the Imperial Exchequer. Seeing that the financial relations between the two countries have not been very satisfactory up to the present, this country, as a salve to her conscience, ought to have been only too glad on this occasion to give the whole of this small sum which she considers necessary to develop the material resources of Ireland, without taking part of it from the funds which were secured by the despoiling of the Irish Church. I earnestly hope no loophole will be afforded for shelving this question. There are parts of the Bill which may require to be altered, but there will be an opportunity to do that when the Bill is before a Committee, and to take any other step now would be to preclude the possibility of carrying the Bill this year, a contingency which I should regard as absolutely disastrous.

MR. DAVITT (Mayo, South): Instead of the opportunity to discuss this measure being an obstacle to the passing of the Bill, as seemed to have been feared, the Debate which has taken place will convince the Chief Secretary that it will smooth the passage of the measure from the House to the Committee. When the hon. and gallant Member opposite speaks as an Irishman he is always interesting, but when he expresses his views as a Unionist he is speaking with the encumbrance of an English feeling weighing down his better nature and sentiments. The hon. Member for Waterford said he would support any measure for the good of the people of Ireland, no matter with what motive such measure was brought forward by an English Minister. That is all right so far as it goes, but there is a corollary necessary to the general acceptance of the proposition, and that is that every such measure should be jealously watched and criticised by Irish Nationalists. We are all familiar with the saying, "Beware of the Greeks when they bring gifts," but that is far more applicable to the position between Ireland and England. Beware of any Minister when he proposes something which he alleges is solely for the benefit of the people of Ireland. The hon. Member for Derby, who generally shows much interest in measures of this kind, gave us a good lecture about the measures we should adopt in cases of this kind. But when he deals with Irish matters he generally falls into a mistake. He referred us to what had been done in Denmark and Wurtemberg in helping agricultural industries in those countries and placing them in the position in which they stand to-day. But, surely, he overlooks a very obvious objection to his argument, for the first and all-important condition in those countries is the national form of government which exists there. I think he will be ready to admit my contention that, if we had not been robbed of our right to look after our own industries by the Act of Union, we should, a generation ago, have done for our agricultural workers in Ireland all, and probably more, than he has found has been done by the national Governments of the two countries to which he has referred. The general opinion in Ireland is entirely in favour of the objects which this Bill intends to promote. There is no doubt, and rightly, a jealous feeling

as regards one of the purposes which lie behind the introduction of this measure. The main objection I have to the Bill is in regard to its machinery in setting up another Dublin Castle Board, and I say this notwithstanding the views which have been expressed by my hon. friend the Member for Waterford. Such boards as these are obnoxious to the national sentiment in Ireland, for they are regarded as centres of jobbery and extravagance, and I will not use any stronger language than that. These boards are over-officialled in every single instance, and exist mainly, in my opinion, for the purpose of providing berths for men who are to be enlisted into the service at Dublin Castle against the popular aspirations of Ireland. This new board promises to have all the bad qualities of the existing bodies, and this is why some of us on these benches look with disfavour upon any proposal to increase this obnoxious system. There is no necessity for this board, even for the carrying out of the admirable objects sought through the machinery of this Bill. There is nothing proposed to be done by this Bill for the agricultural industry or for technical education which could not be carried out just as well by the existing machinery. For instance, it could be carried out by the Congested Districts Board, which would be the least objectionable of all the boards, and which would be very preferable to the one which is now to be called into existence. Why go to the expense of organising this new department if my contention rests upon facts? The Bill has a two-fold purpose: Beyond the main object of creating posts and offices for hungry Unionists in Ireland, it is intended to encourage better methods of agricultural industry and to promote technical education both in town and country. This is the extent of the work generally which is to be done by means of this measure. Now, what is there in such a programme which cannot be carried out by the Congested Districts Board? It is already engaged in encouraging better methods of cultivation, better breeding of stock, better schemes for promoting fisheries, and so on. Now, why not enlarge its powers, increase its revenue, and add to it expert knowledge by placing upon it a few more competent men, rather than have another expensive board, which is not necessary for the real and actual needs of the country? The

real underlying object of the Bill seems to be to multiply posts and offices in Ireland, in pursuance of the general policy of this Government, which has been one of political jobbery from the moment it came into office until the present day. Its general policy has been to dole out grants to landlords, and grants to parsons, and to shareholders of the Niger Company, and this is the policy which is really underlying the proposal of the Government in this Bill. As to technical education, surely the proper and rational way is to begin with the schools and build upwards to the university. That is the scheme which has been adopted in foreign countries, and the existing educational machinery would serve this purpose. That is what ought to be done if the real motive of this Bill is to help Ireland in this matter. I wish to say a few words about the finance of this Bill, which has been so much lauded by the hon. Member for Waterford. It is, I think, clear that the sum of £78,000 which, with other sums, is to finance the working of this measure, is the only amount which is to go to Ireland from the Imperial Exchequer. The other sums mentioned are to be deducted, I believe, from the grants already made for various Irish purposes. Presumably this £78,000, now paid to the Commissioners of National Education, which will be taken for the purposes of this Bill, will be replaced by an additional grant from some Imperial and not from Irish sources. I cannot commend the generosity of the English Exchequer in financing this question, because this £78,000, which is to be the contribution of this great and wealthy Empire for this laudable purpose in Ireland, will amount to about one penny per acre for every acre of cultivable land in Ireland. That is not very generous treatment of a poor country which you persist in robbing every year of £3,000,000 in taxation over and above what the Royal Commission has declared to be its fair share. I have now said practically all I intend to say upon this measure. We are called upon in various ways to contribute most generous and general advice to this new department; the whole of Ireland, in fact, is to be organised in a very systematic manner in order that this advice may be tendered; but I do not find in my reading of the Bill that the county councils, the district councils, or the Chambers of Commerce,

or any other body in Ireland is to have any deciding voice as to the way in which this Irish money on the one hand, and this miserable dole from the Imperial Exchequer on the other, are to be expended. It is all very well to be liberal with the money which costs you nothing, but my contention is that if you are sincere in your desire to help Irish agricultural industries, and to promote technical instruction in Ireland, you should not only give an elective voice to the people of Ireland, but you should give power to the bodies to be called into existence under this Bill to distribute this money to the best advantage, and in the interests of the various counties and localities in Ireland. I hope when we get this Bill into Committee upstairs, we shall be able to persuade the Chief Secretary for Ireland that the Bill is defective in this respect. If he will only show a disposition—which I regret to say he does not often show in this House—to give way to Irish feeling in this matter, he will find that, instead of having to look to these benches for opposition, he will receive encouragement from all sections of the House.

***MR. ARCHDALE (Fermanagh, N.):**

As a representative of the agricultural interests in this House, I may say that it is my earnest wish, and the wish of the constituency which I represent, that this Bill should be passed into law, and I wish to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland upon having brought it in. I cordially agree with the views of the hon. Member for Waterford which he has expressed in his speech, and I congratulate him upon that speech, which I am sure will be regarded with great respect in the North of Ireland. With regard to the Bill itself, I think the Government is to be congratulated upon the very liberal conditions which it contains, although I am sorry to say that the North-West of Ireland has been left out in the cold. In the North-West of Ireland we shall get nothing at all, although that section of Ireland contains many counties where the population is dependent upon agriculture. Therefore, I hope we shall receive some further advantage than is now provided under this Bill. As regards the proposal of the hon. Member for South Mayo about the Congested Districts Board, I do not think any practical farmer would favour that proposition. Every agricultural board that I

know in Ireland is in favour of the construction of this new board, and they do not desire the powers of the Congested Districts Board to be extended. I will not occupy any more time, and I again congratulate the right hon. Gentleman upon this Bill. I hope he will use his utmost endeavours to pass it into law this session.

MR. ARTHUR J. MOORE (London-derry): I should like to make one or two remarks about several points which were raised in the speech of the hon. Member for South Mayo. I think anybody who looks at Ireland as a purely agricultural country cannot fail to see the great advantage of having a representative of the great staple industry of Ireland upon the floor of this House, and one to whom we can address questions and receive information. The hon. Member made one other remark about this Government being a Government of grants and doles to parsons and landlords. I think, however, the hon. Member ought to accept this Bill in a more grateful way, considering that the dole to be spent here will reach absolutely the people for whose benefit it is intended. I do not wish to take up the time of the House any longer, because I have been associated with this movement in Ireland, and, therefore, I do not think it is necessary for me to express my opinions at any great length. I feel grateful to the right hon. Gentleman, the Chief Secretary for Ireland, for the way in which he has persisted in this Bill, for he has been liable and subjected to a great deal of misrepresentation, and I am glad to say that he has borne the difficulties thrown in his way with great patience, and he has now arrived at the fruition of his labours. This is a Bill not merely calculated to benefit Ireland, but it is positively a necessity, especially in view of the progress made in foreign countries, particularly Denmark. We are being absolutely ruled out of the market completely by foreign countries owing to the organisation and better instruction which prevail in them. Look at the position of Denmark. Twenty-five years ago Denmark, with its cold, poor and inclement climate, sent £100,000 worth of butter to this country. At that time Ireland controlled the market, and Cork butter regulated the price throughout the world, and we had almost a monopoly of the butter

trade. Last year Denmark exported £5,000,000 worth of butter. How has that been done? In two ways—by technical education and instruction, and by the organisation of the industry itself. Itinerant instructors are sent round to show how better butter is to be made, and how new machinery and new methods are to be adopted. The interests of agriculture are carefully fostered in the schools, large shows are organised, and surprise competitions between different dairies are established. The number of dairies entering these competitions is listed, and on a given day a telegram is despatched calling on them to send forward their produce at once for competition. The staffs do not know when they may be called upon, and they are kept at an even and continuous pressure. Let me follow for a moment this system of organisation in Denmark. The organisation follows the butter not only from the factory but to the steamer and on to London, and the exact hour at which it will arrive in London is known before it leaves Denmark. I am glad to note in this Bill a clause enabling the department to approach the Railway Commissioners. I hold in my hand a photograph of packages of butter smashed to atoms in transit, but the Danish importers have not to suffer in that way. Even after their butter arrives in London, it is not left alone. It is met by one of the most qualified representatives that any country could have. He has a net-work of representatives throughout the country, and if low class Danish butter is attempted to be sold he prosecutes the vendor in a British court of law. I should like to refer to a matter which is of great interest in the North of Ireland. I refer to the question of flax. Year by year the production of flax is falling off. We are told by gentlemen in Belfast who hold very high positions in the linen trade, that it is falling off from want of proper skill in treating the crop. Continental countries, with their elaborate systems of organisation, are now putting flax of high quality upon the market, which fetches from £61 to £74 per ton, as against £56 per ton in the North of Ireland. In my own constituency some 10,000 girls depend on the shirt industry of Derry, and that industry must depend on the manufacture of the raw material at the cheapest possible price and in the best condition. There is only

Mr. Archdale.

one more question to which I will refer, that is the question of agricultural credit, which has been taken up with such conspicuous success by the hon. Member for Chester. It is a question of enormous importance to relieve the people of Ireland from the toils of the "gombeen" man. The system of agricultural credit has spread over the whole of the Continent, and when I tell the House that in Germany alone the transactions in these credit banks amount to £150,000,000 a year, the importance of the subject to agriculture will be realised. No objection has been raised by the existing banks and institutions in Ireland to the full development of the agricultural credit system, and I am glad to say that the Bank of Ireland, one of the most doggedly conservative institutions in Europe, has offered to lend at a very low rate of interest to any legitimately constituted society. There is a doctrine in Ireland that this measure or similar measures ought to be delayed until Home Rule or some measure of compulsory purchase is passed. I am perfectly in favour of compulsory purchase if it be for the benefit of the farmers, but that is a question for them to decide. There are differences about it, but for my own part I believe that it is the true lasting and final solution of the land question in Ireland. I wish to protest against this doctrine that we are to have delay. If it be adopted we shall have nothing left to fight for. I only wish to express once more my thanks to the right hon. Gentleman for having persisted in this measure, and I am exceedingly glad that he has brought the county councils into it. When in Ireland I found up and down the country a feeling of general hope and sympathy with the progress the county councils were making, and much satisfaction was expressed that the right hon. Gentleman had given them an opportunity of exercising an influence on agriculture. I hope the influence of popular control will be extended in the Committee upstairs.

*MR. J. C. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I think it is generally agreed on all sides of the House that we are in favour of the principle and objects of this measure, but there may legitimately be some difference of opinion as to the methods by which it is sought to carry out these objects, and whether the machinery provided in the

Bill is or is not satisfactory. I do not think that the machinery is the best that could be devised for the purpose in view. I find that the department is all-powerful and bureaucratic, as all departments of Dublin Castle are. The Government had a unique and unrivalled opportunity of setting up a popular department, which would command popular confidence. Two years ago, when the right hon. Gentleman brought in a similar Bill, he had not that opportunity, but now, owing to the creation of district and county councils, it would have been quite easy for the Government to have set up this new department on an elective and representative system which would still be in touch with the executive Government. With reference to the Vice-President, it would have been quite simple for the Government to have given the provincial councils or the new Agricultural Board a voice and vote in his election. Of course the right hon. Gentleman, notwithstanding his untiring industry, has more than enough to do, and it would be practically impossible for him to supervise the work of agricultural reform in Ireland, or do more than be the Parliamentary mouth-piece of the department. But is there any reason why the Vice-President of this department should be a Member of Parliament at all or a prominent politician? Would it not be better to adopt the suggestion of the Technical Instruction Committee and appoint a couple of Commissioners who should be experts? The Vice-President is to be appointed and is removable by one of the Secretaries of State. I fail to see why that provision was introduced.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: He must be appointed by the Prime Minister.

*MR. J. C. FLYNN: That does not diminish my objection. In the interest of technical instruction you should have a couple of experts appointed by the Lord Lieutenant with the approval of the bodies to be set up under the Bill. I think the most satisfactory part of the Bill is that dealing with technical instruction, and I think it will be a great step in advance. The large council which the Bill sets up, and which consists of nearly a hundred members, will be nothing more nor less than a glorified farmers' club. They have only to meet for the purpose of discussing matters of public interest once a year,

and representatives of farmers' clubs and agricultural associations would do and that just as well. The Agricultural Board may advise the department on matters submitted to them by the department, but they have no power of initiation or of control. The department is omnipotent. It only can initiate expenditure, and that is a very grave and serious defect in the measure. I can remember the right hon. Gentleman, when introducing the Bill two years ago, said that it was generally recognised that the success of such a Board as is proposed to be set up would largely depend upon its getting into real and close touch with the people whose interest it was intended to benefit. But how are you to get into close touch with the people by means of a consultative council? I should have thought that it would have been a simple matter for the Agricultural Board and the department to act together, and to provide that the Agricultural Board, on which the popular element should be represented by two-thirds, should have a voice in carrying out any scheme.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: I have already pointed out that the concurrence of the Agricultural Board will be required to any scheme. If the hon. Member will look at Sub-section F of Clause 16, I cannot see how he can say that the department is omnipotent.

*MR. J. C. FLYNN: I maintain that it is not only the concurrence of the Board that should be required; the Board should be called in at an early stage, should have the power of consultation with the department, and have a voice in initiating reform. As to the allocation of the surplus money, I find there is a capital sum for the Veterinary College, £10,000 for the Munster Institution—a most useful institution—and £10,000 for sea fisheries. That is a very small sum for the sea fisheries. At present a sum of £4,000 is voted for the inspection of fisheries in Ireland. Will that sum still be voted?

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: Yes.

*MR. J. C. FLYNN: That is so far satisfactory. I do not pretend to be an expert in these matters, but I have seen correspondence from fish merchants and curers in Ireland, and they say that there should

be a separate Board for Sea Fisheries, or at any rate a kind of sub-department. Beyond all doubt the fishing industry is largely on the increase in the west and south of Ireland, and I believe that if a proper sum of money were placed at the disposal of the department, the sea fisheries of Ireland could be developed to an almost unlimited extent. £10,000 is a very small sum, and with that I am afraid very little can be done in the direction I have named. Another point is that the Government should institute a Government brand for mackerel and hake, the same as is done in Scotland with regard to herring. In regard to the financial portion of the Bill I contend that though it may appear on the face of it that the Treasury is advancing a sum of £78,000, when the subject is carefully examined it amounts to considerably less. Of course the right hon. Gentleman on the First Reading said that the £78,000 will be devoted to education; but it would have been more satisfactory had that been clearly stated. The Treasury officials are so expert, so smart, and sometimes so unconscionable in regard to Irish money, that it will be the duty of Irish members to watch very carefully how they treat this matter in the future. The sum at present voted by Parliament for science and art instruction is £42,300. I contend that when this department takes over the administration of the grants for science and art instruction, it should be separated entirely from the Science and Art Department in England. The proportion of the probate duty which should fall to Ireland is nine-hundredths. The total of Science and Art votes is £996,000, and nine-hundredths of that would be £89,000, instead of £42,300, a difference of £47,000 in favour of Ireland. A great deal has been said in the course of the Debate that nothing shall be done to delay the progress of this measure. We are all in favour of the principle of the Bill, and wish to see it pass this session, but it is our duty to criticise every measure concerned with Ireland, and I am one of those who do not believe that the Bill should be rushed through without fair and moderate discussion. No one can be said to be responsible for the Bill being brought in so late in the session but the First Lord of the Treasury and the Chief Secretary. This measure was mentioned in the Queen's Speech, and it was only

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six months after that the Bill was brought in and thrown on the table, and we were asked to pass it quickly, and discuss it upstairs. Complaint in this respect did not come from Nationalists alone. Lord Farnham, the Orange Grand Master, spoke quite as strongly some little time ago. He said :

"He could not help regretting the announcement made by the Leader of the House of Commons in reply to a question put to him with regard to a measure immensely to the benefit of their country, and which had been mentioned in three different Speeches of the Queen. They were, in brief, told that they were to take it without discussion or leave it alone. That was not the attitude, he maintained, which should be observed in regard to a measure of great and far-reaching importance, and which concerned the prosperity and welfare of their country. He regretted most deeply that a man of Mr. Balfour's position and ability, and a man who they in Ireland all so much admired, should be content to dismiss the question as to the fate of the Agricultural and Technical Instructions Bill with such a discourteous answer. A Bill like it was not a Bill to be rushed through the House of Commons, and he hoped they would be given an opportunity of expressing an opinion on the measure."

That showed that there is a very strong opinion in Ireland, outside the National Party, of the scant courtesy with which a measure of this importance has been treated by the First Lord of the Treasury. If proper facility had been given, and the Bill had been brought in earlier in the session, we would have had adequate discussion of its principles, and the details might have been referred to a Committee of the whole House.

*MR. MICHAEL AUSTIN (Limerick, W.): As a supporter of this Bill I may be allowed to make a few criticisms upon it. That those criticisms are different to those of other Irish Members I cannot help. I think the Chief Secretary will recognise the force of my suggestions. This Bill has raised great hopes in the minds of the Irish people, and it is no wonder, although they have not studied it, that many public bodies have passed recommendations in its favour. But while we accept this measure, we are far from accepting it in the spirit of the right hon. Gentleman, and we shall endeavour to considerably amend it in Committee. It is a poor recognition of the keenest needs of Ireland, the evidence of which is apparent in the poverty of the agriculturists and the decay of the manufacturing industries and skilled

trades of the country. How is the state of things to be met? Primarily by recognising the distinctive features of the agricultural as contrasted with the manufacturing industries, and providing the means by which the workers in those industries may be better equipped for their work in technical and manual skill. I contend that this measure does not sufficiently recognise the distinction between the two classes of industry, nor provide for the direct encouragement of either. I put a question to the Chief Secretary on this point a few weeks ago, and he pointed out that I could raise the question on the Second Reading, and that opportunity I gladly take. The powers and duties supposed to be conferred and exercised relate not only to those connected with aiding, improving, and developing agriculture; but with horticulture, forestry, dairying, breeding of horses, cattle, and other live stock, home and cottage industries, the cultivation of and preparation of flax, inland fisheries, and other industries. Beyond this they relate to diseases of animals, destructive insects, statistics relating to agriculture, prices of produce, and the weighing of cattle; besides this to the inspection and encouragement of sea fisheries, the construction of piers and harbours, the supply of fishing boats and gear, the enforcement of bye-laws relating to sea fishing, and beyond all these technical instruction, which should be a separate department. Technical education is a subject to which I have paid great attention, and I find that although the Duke of Devonshire, then Marquis of Hartington, declared, in 1889, that technical education was a scandal to this country, and an amendment of that Act was made in 1891, which undoubtedly was of immense advantage, still no improvement has been made which is of material benefit to Ireland. The object of technical education is to familiarise the young lad with all the processes and details of the trade he intends to follow, and to show him how the knowledge he has acquired may be applied in the practical performance of his business. It is found in England that the lad who possesses this advantage is now in greater demand. Other countries lay claim to their technical schools as the great factor in developing their industries, and this shows the still greater necessity of treating Ireland more generously in

this matter. But over and above all these multifarious powers and duties, the Bill proposes to transfer to the new department any of the powers and duties exercised and performed by any Government in Ireland, and proposes to deal with these manifold and complicated duties by assisting it with a Council of Agriculture, an Agricultural Board, and a Board of Technical Instruction. The word I take exception to is "assist." The Council of Agriculture is only supposed to meet once a year for the purpose of discussing matters of public interest in connection with any of the purposes of the Act. It is not an arduous duty, and it seems to partake of a figure-head body, without any appreciable purpose for effective good. Under Clause 12 the Agricultural Board is only enabled to advise the department when any question is submitted to them. It is simply created to advise, and are unable to see that their advice is carried out. But it seems to me such an extraordinary thing to put such a clause in this Bill. The Board of Technical Education is to consist of three persons appointed by the County Councils of each of the City boroughs of Dublin and Belfast, one representing the Urban City districts of the City of Dublin; one each by the County Councils of Cork, Limerick, Londonderry, and Waterford, one by each of the Chambers of Commerce of Dublin, Belfast, and Cork; one by the provincial committee of each province, one by the Commissioners of National Education, one by the Intermediate Education Board, and four persons by the department, but there is no direct representation by the people it will most affect. Is it for one moment to be assumed that such machinery can adequately deal with these interests in Ireland? The department to which all these matters will go will consist of the Chief Secretary as President, and a Vice-President, aided by the transference of the officials already connected with the various departments affected. The Agricultural Board and the Board of Technical Instruction, though bearing the semblance of popular bodies, have no power whatever. They are merely to advise. It is essential to the interests of both the agricultural and manufacturing industries that the powers and duties of the department should be so far separated as to secure adequate provision for technical

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instruction being distinctly encouraged. With regard to agriculture it should include the principles underlying the manual operations of husbandry, the principles and application of new methods and new machinery in connection with dairy operations and so forth, following the lines of England, Scotland, and Wales. Out of the Parliamentary divisions of Ireland not more than six or eight constituencies can be expected to return representatives specially concerned in or conversant with manufacturing industries or skilled trades. It is to meet the wishes of the mechanics and artisans of Ireland that I venture to put forward these few points with the hope that in Committee the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary will pay some attention to them. The Associated Chamber of Commerce in Ireland have put forward certain suggestions for the improvement of the Bill, which I want to see embodied. Those suggestions are that the Technical Instruction Board should be strengthened by certain additional members, especially representatives of the Trades Councils of Dublin, Belfast, Cork, Limerick, Londonderry and Waterford, and that the Agricultural Board and the Technical Instruction Board should have power to initiate and act in certain matters. As at present constituted the Bill affords no ground for hoping that the immediate future needs of the people of Ireland in regard to agriculture and technical instruction will be met to any great extent. It will be my duty in Committee to move such Amendments as I have suggested, and, if necessary, to take a division upon each one, believing that in so doing I shall be best serving the interests of those I represent.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): This Bill was introduced on the 8th May under the ten minutes' rule with a very brief and imperfect statement by the Chief Secretary, and since that date the conduct of the Bill by the Government has been such that an impression began to spread throughout Ireland that there was no real intention of passing the Bill this session. Day by day the Bill was put low down on the Notice Paper, and, in spite of repeated questions, the Government refused to give that reasonable and fair notice to which any group of Members are entitled on any important

measure in which they are interested. No Bill of even second-rate importance has hitherto been treated in similar fashion. The debate to-day fully justifies my action in pressing the Government upon the point, as it is manifest that the time now given is certainly inadequate to the importance of the measure. The course pursued has been unjust to the Bill, and unjust in a special manner to the Irish Members. Subsequently, having fallen down from the position they originally took up, the Government sent minatory and threatening messages that if we did not give certain pledges the Bill would probably be dropped. So far as I am concerned, I sent back a message to the Government to conduct their business with proper decency, and that I would give no pledge whatever. The Government have finally abandoned this preposterous and childish attitude, and put the Bill down as First Order for to-day. All I can say with regard to that is that an ordinary night ought to have been given. The policy of the Government in regard to this and other Bills seems to indicate an intention to turn the conduct of Irish business into a perfect laughing-stock and farce.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: The Local Government Bill!

MR. DILLON: The Local Government Bill is the only Irish Bill since the commencement of this Parliament to which anything like adequate time has been given, and even in that case, on the ground of insufficient time to discuss the questions, powers and matters of detail, and more than detail, were left to be settled by Orders in Council and General Orders of the Local Government Board—a process against which I protested at the time, and of which the local bodies are now beginning to tire. If this system is to be carried much further, it would be better at once to look upon Irish public Bills as Provisional Orders, draft them in Dublin, and lay them on the Table of the House, to be taken or left, without any right to propose Amendments or to criticise them. With regard to this Bill, in its principle and the objects aimed at it is most distinctly not contentious. All sections of the Irish people are agreed that something should be done for the development of agriculture and other Irish industries, and that this important subject has

been neglected far too long. But undoubtedly some of the details are highly contentious. The Bill deals with a department of Irish life which undoubtedly touches the very life blood of the Irish people, and if it is badly administered, terribly evil results will be produced, while if well administered excellent results will follow. It is therefore very necessary that full and adequate discussion should take place. At present the Bill seems calculated to set up another purely "Castle" Department or Board, of at least as objectionable a character as any of those of which Ireland is at present possessed. While I am prepared to support any Bill brought in by any Government which is calculated to benefit the people of Ireland, I shall at the same time look with suspicion upon any such measure. Any criticisms of mine will, perhaps, not carry much weight, but the principles embodied in this measure have been adversely criticised by such authorities as the *Irish Times* and Lord Londonderry. Some hon. Members speak of the large number of resolutions they have received in favour of the Bill, but I have received altogether only about half-a-dozen.

MR. WILLIAM JOHNSTON (Belfast, S.): They know your opinions.

MR. DILLON: That may be. Take, for instance, the Louth County Council:

"We, the Louth County Council, hereby record our disappointment at and disapproval of the financial proposals of the Agriculture and Technical Instruction Bill, which we believe to be entirely inadequate for the accomplishment of the objects in view, and we are of opinion that the representatives of the people should have a more direct voice and responsibility in the control and direction of this department."

I entirely agree with that expression of opinion. Then I have another communication which may throw some light upon the so-called popular movement in favour of the Bill. This resolution comes from the Irish Agricultural Society, Limerick, and is signed by Mr. Anderson, the Secretary of the Society. After endorsing the principles of the Bill the resolution goes on:

"they would, however, point out that the salary named for the Vice-President is entirely inadequate."

Now listen to the remarkable reason why they think the salary is inadequate :

"As the salary of the virtual head of the department must regulate the salaries of all the officials under him, it is of the utmost importance that it should be at such a rate as to enable them to obtain the services of experts of eminence, as the whole success of this department will depend on having the advice to carry out the work of men of real capacity and knowledge, and not persons of the usual routine and job-seeking type."

That is a kind of criticism which does not very seriously affect my mind ; but, while admitting that such salaries should be paid as will attract good men, it is not to be wondered at that, with the experience of past years before us, we should look with a certain amount of anxiety at any fresh proposals to create an enormous number of salaried officials in Ireland. No doubt it is true that the case of Ireland, in respect to its number of salaried Ministers, is different from that of England, and must be judged on different principles ; but that difference exists in more respects than one, and in considering this proposal to increase the number of salaried Ministers for Ireland sitting in this House we cannot avoid taking into account the peculiar condition of Irish representation in the House. That representation is very peculiarly circumstanced. There are twenty-two Unionists and eighty-three Nationalists, the latter by their pledge and the principle of their party being debarred from taking any office, no matter what Government is in power. In the present Parliament, out of those twenty-two Unionists eleven have received either offices or emolument or honours of some sort. Such a state of things undoubtedly is not calculated to improve the *morale* of any party. If we turn from the Irish Unionist Party to the general composition of the House, we find that, roughly speaking, in the history of the present Parliament about one in ten of the hon. Members from Ireland who support the Government have received offices or emolument or honours of some kind. The Irish Unionist party already hold 50 per cent. of the official positions in Ireland, and I suppose that under this Bill another hon. gentleman will be made happy. I daresay that, in spite of the remonstrances of Mr. Anderson, it will not be difficult to find a man willing to

accept £1,200 a year. This is an unwholesome condition of things which we cannot shut out from our minds, for the Irish Unionist party, in the course of a short Parliament, have obtained for themselves honours and emoluments for half their number, and that is certainly to be regarded as a danger to the political virtue of the party. That is one consideration which arises in my mind when I consider this proposal to appoint a new Irish Minister. There is another point to which I desire to draw attention. One of the advantages put forward by the hon. Member for Waterford, and a point which he laid great stress upon, and which was also emphasised by the hon. Member opposite, was that this department was no longer to be one in connection with Dublin Castle, nor was the work to be thrown upon the already over-worked Chief Secretary, but this work was to be done by a Minister directly responsible to this House. Now, I venture to point out that the vice-president under this Bill has no independence whatever. He will be the mere servant of the Chief Secretary, and the hon. Member for Waterford will find, on examining the Bill, that after the vice-president is appointed the Chief Secretary will be just as much responsible to this House for all the proceedings of the new board as he is at present responsible for the proceedings of the Board of Works, the Local Government Board, or any other of the boards which are now strictly Castle Boards. I wish to draw particular attention to this feature, because the vice-president will be simply a servant of the Chief Secretary, and will only be able to speak here when the Chief Secretary is away at his dinner. He will have no independence whatever, and the Chief Secretary will still have to answer for all that this new department does. These are points which I think are worthy of consideration, and I should regard it as a strongly objectionable departure if any Member of this House, not at present receiving a salary, is appointed to this post at £1,200 a year, and should not be called upon to face his constituents. There seems to be a sort of opinion in connection with this measure that it proposes a thing which ought to have been done long ago, and that if this measure, which has for its object the promotion of the agricultural industries of Ireland, is passed Ireland will at once become a prosperous and a wealthy

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country. But we have to consider what the nature of this measure is. I desire to say at once that this Bill differs in one very important particular from the Bill of 1897. In the first place, the Bill of 1897 did not include provision for technical instruction, and the Chief Secretary, upon introducing that Bill, stated that he intended, in the same session, to introduce a further measure dealing with technical instruction by a separate administration. In the Bill of 1897 the sum of £150,000 was set apart for agricultural loans, and that sum, which was set apart from Imperial resources, was denounced at the time as being altogether insufficient. The Chancellor of the Exchequer in his Budget speech in 1897 said that a portion of the surplus was ear-marked for the purpose of technical education in Ireland. Therefore, under that Bill, we had £150,000 set apart, and also a promise of a further grant for technical education. It is my opinion that it would be better if the board for technical education was separated from the agricultural board. I think the necessities of towns and the country districts in regard to technical education are very different, and greater efficiency would be secured if the two departments were kept separate. The total sum placed at the disposal of the department in this Bill is estimated to be £166,000. It is made up as follows: There is £78,000 from the spirit duty, and I should like to know why that sum is not given direct by a Vote. This complication of matters has excited great alarm among the teachers of Ireland, which is not without some foundation, because they are afraid that in the change consequent upon this transfer to the new department some fresh conditions will be attached which may interfere with their present salaries. Why could that assistance not have been given direct without this roundabout and complicated process? Then there is £70,000 set down as the estimated amount to be paid out of the Church Fund. I think that is a very uncertain estimate, and I doubt whether this much-plundered Church Fund will bear that large amount. I press upon the Chief Secretary to let us have the memorandum of the Treasury showing the effect of the Tithe Rent-charge Bill upon the Church Fund. We want to have the figures, for I remember that so long ago as the year 1894 the First Lord of the Treasury solemnly declared that there was no money left in the Church Fund for any

purpose, and I think now we ought to be able to examine the state of that fund. In any case I do object to this proposal as a precedent of great danger in the future, because it is pursuing a policy which has been recognised from the date of the disestablishment of the Church, when certain grants which were provided for out of the Church fund were utilised to support the Imperial Exchequer, and from that hour the Church fund has been used to relieve the Imperial Exchequer of this country of burdens which it ought to have borne. Then there is £12,000 a year from the Judicature Act, and £6,000 from the Agricultural Schools. Of this sum of £166,000 the sum of £55,000 a year is to be allocated to technical instruction in the towns, which is not a very large sum after all. Then there is £10,000 a year to sea fisheries, which I do not think is enough, and this leaves £100,000 a year for the agricultural branch of the department. That is to say that the Agricultural Department under this Bill obtains £50,000 a year less than the amount allotted to it under the Bill of 1897. And yet even the proposals of the Bill of 1897 as regards finance were denounced as entirely inadequate. So much for the financial proposals of this Bill, which I think are altogether inadequate and shabby. I come now to the machinery of this measure, and I think some of the statements which have been made on this subject are quite foreign to the question, because if the machinery is bad the Bill will be a failure, and it will either do no good at all, or will do positive mischief. Therefore, it is of vital importance to consider whether the machinery of the Bill is such as is likely to work well, and it is all the more important that I should upon the Second Reading of this Bill draw attention to the faults of its machinery, because if it is sent to the Grand Committee I may not be allowed to be on that Committee. I have already dealt with the question of the Vice-President; I have shown that he will have no independence at all, and that he will be nothing more nor less than a secretary or clerk to the present Chief Secretary for Ireland. I hold the view expressed by the hon. Member for South Mayo that it would have been far better to have constructed this new department on the lines of the Congested Districts Board rather than give power to the Lord Lieutenant to absorb the Congested

Districts Board into the new department. We all know that the Government have a clear majority on the Congested Districts Board, and that if the Chief Secretary cared he could completely sweep that board and all its work into this new department. I think the Congested Districts Board, with all its faults, should be allowed to continue its existence, and instead of any demand being made to bring it to an end, it ought to be placed upon a more democratic basis. We have heard a great deal of the Agricultural Council which is provided for in Section 8, but that council will have no functions or power whatever under this Act. They are to meet once a year to form a debating society, to express their views, but they will have no power at all and may be disregarded. Now I come to the Agricultural Board. I desire to ask what is the function of the Agricultural Board, because it appears to me that the whole of this Bill is really very much of a delusion. It is called the Agricultural and Technical Instruction Bill, but I notice that this has been somewhat altered, and it is now described as a Bill for establishing a Department of Agriculture in Ireland. Now what are the powers of the Agricultural Board under the present Bill? They are these: If they are asked by the Department they can give advice, but that advice may be treated with contempt. They have no power whatever of initiative.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: They have the power of vetoing the expenditure of money.

MR. DILLON: But what good will that be to them when they have no power to expend the money themselves? If they did that, the money would only accumulate under the Department until they changed their minds, and it might lie there for ever so far as the power of the Agricultural Board is concerned until the department chose to give way. A great deal has been said about the introduction of the elective principle into the composition of the board, but it has been introduced in a very roundabout way, and the board is almost sure to be composed at least of one-half of the supporters of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland. When we compare the Bill in this respect with the Act of 1897 we find an extraordinary and amaz-

ing difference. In the Bill of 1897 Clause 12 proposed to transfer to the board control over the money, and the money was to be transferred to the board. In this Bill no money is given to the board; neither is there any control or initiative whatever given to this new body. Under the pretext of popularising the board all its powers are taken away from it and handed over to the department. I say deliberately that in that way the Bill is very skilfully drafted to deceive the unwary, and the elective element is turned into a perfect farce. Under this Bill, for good or for ill, the whole power is centred in the department absolutely, and there is nothing in the Bill to compel them to listen to the advice of the board or of the so-called council. The council is to sit with the Chief Secretary as president and with two vice-presidents; in other words, when you strip the Bill of its embroidery and trimmings you find that the whole machinery is absolutely and solely under the control of the Chief Secretary himself without any restraint or check whatever. That is the machinery of the Bill, and those who see in it an advance in the direction of popular control seem to me to have given but a very slight study to the provisions of the Act. Section 2 provides that all these powers are to be transferred to the department, whereas in the Bill of 1897 all those powers were given to the board. There is only one other point with which I wish to deal, and it is a very important one, because it is a point which is concealed in the drafting of the measure. It is provided that in carrying out the work of this department they may select any public body for the purpose of carrying this Bill into effect. The Bill provides that the department may require that the money shall be applied either directly or indirectly through the agency or with the co-operation of any public body or joint committee. Anyone accustomed to deal with legislation in this country would fancy that in that provision a public body might be taken to mean a body elected by the public. I do not know myself what would be the exact legal definition, but we are left in no doubt as to what is intended by a public body in that sub-section. In the definition Clause it says:

"The expression 'public body' means any body with the power of levying rates or taxes, and any legally constituted public body,

agricultural society, council, or committee, or any organisation formally approved by the department."

The department are to be left at liberty to grant any sums of money they may think fit to any association they like. We may take that as intended to mean that it will be possible to vote money out of this revenue to endow the Agricultural Society of Ireland, and this definition clause is clearly drawn for the purpose of including that association as well as others. I certainly think this is a very large order indeed to introduce into an Act of Parliament, and it is a very vicious precedent to introduce. You first put into the Bill a provision that the money may be distributed through a public body, and then you introduce a definition of the words "public body," so that even a limited liability company can be considered as a public body. If you desire to give power to the department to endow any of these associations or companies, then you ought to bring them in by name, so that we may know what we are doing. If that is not done I do think that this is a very vicious and bad precedent to establish. I think this is trespassing on very dangerous ground, because some of these associations are trading societies, and it is a very large order to give to this department the power to subsidise trade associations. The discussion to-day has entirely justified the view I have taken all along that this is a complicated Bill, and however much Irish Members may be in accord as regards the desirability of carrying out the objects at which the Bill aims, when we come to consider the details I think it will be admitted that there is much which is contentious and highly objectionable, and that it is not at all unreasonable to ask that a fair opportunity shall be given to discuss and alter these details.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: The hon. Member for East Mayo has complained of the conduct of the Government with reference to this Bill. What has been the conduct of the Government? In the first place the Bill was introduced under what is known as the ten minutes' rule, and in the second place we intimated to the House that if this Bill met with severe opposition, and if the discussion on it was protracted, it would be impossible to carry it during the present session. It

was introduced under the ten minutes' rule because it was perfectly clear, having regard to all the circumstances of the case, the choice lay between introducing it under that rule or not at all. Then, again, the hon. Member complains that we would not undertake to carry this Bill through the House if it were seriously opposed; but the time at our disposal was limited, and it was preferable to act in the way we did rather than drop the Bill.

MR. DILLON: The right hon. Gentleman is misrepresenting what I said. I never made that complaint. What I complained of was that the Bill had not been put down as the first Order, but no one ever spoke seriously of opposing the Bill.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: If that is the only complaint it has now been removed, because the Bill has been put down as first Order. But the hon. Member goes on to say that he never stated that he would offer that kind of opposition which, although it may not assume the form of direct hostility, still assails the Bill. That is not the impression he has succeeded in conveying either to this House or to the public in Ireland, nor is it the impression which has been conveyed by the journal which habitually supports the hon. Gentleman's views. If our Bill deserves all the hard things the hon. Member says of it I am bound to say it would have been proper for the hon. Member not to assume the attitude he now assumes—the attitude of one "willing to wound, but yet afraid to strike." It would have been more straightforward and honest on the part of the hon. Member if he had frankly and openly opposed the Bill on the Second Reading. Then the hon. Member went on to refer to the statement of the hon. Member for Waterford that this Bill had practically the unanimous support of public opinion in Ireland, and he quoted in the opposite sense the London Letter of the *Irish Times* written on the day the Bill was introduced. According to that letter the Bill produced a feeling of profound dissatisfaction, and the writer expressed his conviction as to what the hon. Member for Waterford would have said if he had had the advantage of an interview with him, and he also stated what the hon. Member for Dublin University actually

felt on the subject. But why does the hon. Member go back to the date of the introduction of the Bill? If he wants to know what public opinion in Ireland is he should let us take public opinion in Ireland after the Bill was produced, and after the public had an opportunity of fully considering its provisions. What is the use of going back to the date of the introduction of the Bill, before it was exposed to the criticism of public opinion? Then the hon. Member, in order to suggest that this Bill had produced an unfavourable impression on the public, was not content with going back to the date of its introduction, but actually went back to last November, when Lord Londonderry delivered a speech, not on the subject of this Bill at all, but on the Bill introduced two years ago. Really, is the hon. Member so reduced in arguments that he has to go back first of all to the date when the Bill was introduced, and then to last November? I think it shows what a weak case he has got. I shall deal presently with the hon. Gentleman's more detailed criticisms, but passing for a moment to the other speeches, I may say that the general course of the debate has been very gratifying both to myself and to my colleagues, and it has dispensed me, I think, from the necessity of explaining the general principles and objects for which this Bill has been brought forward. So far as the general objects and principles of the Bill are concerned, there has, I think, been something like unanimity, and therefore, at this hour of the afternoon, I will not delay the House with the reasons which actuated the Government in bringing in this Bill, but I will deal at once with the various criticisms advanced during the course of the Debate. These criticisms have dealt almost exclusively with four points: (1) the constitution of the department; (2) the proposal to give the vice-president a seat on the Board of National Education and on the Intermediate Education Board; (3) the relations between the department and the councils which the Bill proposes to set up; and (4) the financial provisions of the Bill. I will deal with the objections which have been offered on these four points in order. The constitution of the department was objected to by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean. He laid down the general principle that it is undesirable to add to the

number of Ministers having seats in this House. As a general proposition, I do not know that I should be disposed to disagree with the right hon. Baronet, but abstract propositions do not take us very far in politics. No doubt it is undesirable to multiply the number of Ministers beyond the necessities of the case. But what we have to consider is whether in any particular instance there is or is not sufficient ground for the creation of a new Minister. The idea of the right hon. Baronet appears to be that there should be very few Ministers, but that they should be very powerful, and that the rest of the work of Government should be carried out by permanent officials. I think everybody must feel the objections which exist to the indefinite creation of new Ministers, but in spite of the right hon. Baronet's objection, we have been slowly but steadily moving in that direction. One of the reasons undoubtedly is the increasing complexity of government in more recent days, and the additional amount of work constantly being thrown on the executive. I might rest the proposal in the Bill on the difficulty which has been felt in many other departments of the Government besides that of the Chief Secretary in coping with the work thrown upon them, but I do not intend to do that. The right hon. Baronet, I think, omitted one of the considerations which weigh with this House from time to time when a new Minister is created. It is that whereas a Minister with a seat in this House is directly responsible to the House, a permanent official is only responsible to his chief, and where the work is of such a kind that it is desirable that it should be carried out by a Parliamentary officer, in such circumstances the right hon. Baronet will admit that the desirability of making that officer responsible to the House is a very strong reason for making him a Parliamentary officer instead of a permanent official. That in a high degree is the case in the present instance. What are to be the duties of the vice-president? The Bill proposes to establish a general council of agriculture, and, in addition, two boards into which the element of popular election will largely enter—a board of agriculture and a board of technical instruction. In order that the working head of the department should carry out his duties in a satisfactory manner it is necessary he should be in close communication

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with those bodies. But it is clearly impossible to impose that duty on the Chief Secretary, who during the six or seven months of the session must be in constant attendance in Parliament. The vice-president whom it is proposed to create under this Bill must necessarily pass a large part even of the Parliamentary session in Ireland. Of course, he will have to come over here for critical and important Divisions, and also when the Estimates for his department are under consideration. But, in constructing this Bill, our intention was that the vice-president should spend a larger part of his time in Ireland than it is possible for the Chief Secretary to do. I do not think, considering the very special character of the duties to be thrown upon him, that they could be wisely or usefully carried out by a permanent official. If it is necessary, in connection with this new department, that there should be Parliamentary responsibility in any real sense of the term, then the head of the department should be a member of this House, and the House will see we had no other way of solving the difficulty except by creating this new Parliamentary officer. So much for the criticisms of the right hon. Baronet. But the constitution of the department has been criticised also from an opposite point of view—the point of view of those who think that the position of the vice-president is not sufficiently strong, as the provisions of the Bill now stand, that his salary should be increased and that altogether he should be an official of a higher rank than is given to him in the Bill. I think this criticism rests to some extent on a misapprehension. The hon. Member for South Mayo read from a document prepared by the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society a plea that the vice-president should receive a larger salary than is proposed, and the argument was based on the assumption that the salaries of the permanent officials under him must necessarily be less. That really is not the case. We have, as a matter of fact, followed as models in the construction of this department the Local Government Board of England and the Board of Trade. In both of these departments there is a Parliamentary Secretary, who occupies a position analogous to that of the vice-president under this Bill. The Parliamentary Secretary of the Local Government Board in England and the

Parliamentary Secretary of the Board of Trade are both in receipt of a salary of £1,200 a year, but the Secretary of each of these departments has a maximum salary of £1,800, and the Assistant Secretary of each has a salary which rises to a maximum of £1,200, an amount equivalent to the salary of the Parliamentary Secretary of the department. Therefore there is nothing whatever in the Bill as drafted which provides that the salaries of the permanent officials shall be less than the salary of the vice-president.

MR. DAVITT: Will no distinction be made having regard to the size and importance of England and Ireland?

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: That is for the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but in reply to the observations of the hon. Gentleman, I may say that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has agreed to fix the salary of the vice-president at the salary now received by the Parliamentary Secretaries of the Board of Trade and of the Local Government Board in England. If the hon. Member means, when he refers to the sizes of the two countries, that the salaries of Irish officials should be smaller—

MR. DAVITT: In proportion to the work to be done.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: That is a very different thing. I entirely agree that the salary a Government official should be paid, whether in England or in Ireland, should be proportionate to the difficulty, the laborious character, and responsibility of the duties he discharges.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): Can we know the names of these gentlemen?

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: Oh, no. The department will not be constituted until April, and I do not possess the information myself. It would be impossible for me to give the information suggested, as absolutely nothing has been settled. In constituting the department we have followed the analogy of the Local Government Board of England and the Board of Trade. I have listened to the speeches of hon. Members opposite in order to ascertain what sort of department they would desire. They apparently

desire to have two commissioners, with a president and vice-president. In other words, they wish to base this department on the analogy not of the English Local Government Board, but of the Irish Local Government Board. If that is so, I am bound to say it is the first time I have ever heard any commendation of the system under which the Irish Local Government Board is constituted. An hon. Member observed that I stated the other night the constitution of the Irish Local Government Board was relatively not satisfactory because the permanent officials were able to override by their votes the Parliamentary head of the department. I believe what I said was that if permanent officials had such power as would enable them to override the Parliamentary heads of a department, all Parliamentary responsibility in the proper sense of the term would be destroyed. You cannot make a Minister responsible unless you give him power. So much for the constitution of the department. The hon. Baronet the Member for West Kerry raised a question, the importance of which I fully recognise, with respect to the position we propose to give to the vice-president on the Board of National Education and the Intermediate Education Board. This proposal was introduced simply from a desire on my part to secure unity among the various bodies entrusted with the administration of educational matters in Ireland. I find that it has been interpreted in some quarters as an indication of a desire on our part to upset the balance which now exists by statute on the Board of National Education as between Roman Catholics and Protestants, and also to upset the similar balance which practically, though not by statute, exists on the Intermediate Education Board. No idea of the kind ever entered my head. I am bound to say I set considerable value on this provision, and I should be sorry to see it removed altogether from the Bill, but, of course, I do not regard it as in any way vital. What I suggest as a compromise, in order to obviate the fears of those who think such a result might ensue, is that the vice-president should have a seat on the board, should have the right to attend meetings and receive papers, but should not have the right to vote. If that compromise is acceptable to hon. Members, I shall be ready to accept it in Committee.

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Now I come to the question of the relations between the department and the boards. Here, again, I have listened very carefully in order to ascertain what hon. Members who objected to the suggestions in the Bill had to suggest in place of our proposals, but I have not succeeded in ascertaining that they have any definite scheme. So far as I can understand, the argument of the hon. Member for North Cork and the hon. Member for South Mayo is that instead of giving, as the Bill does, to these boards power to advise the department and the right of veto, in the majority of cases, they should be entrusted with the expenditure of the considerable sum to be placed at the disposal of the department. I would point out that the provisions in this Bill have been to a very large degree taken from institutions which already exist, and which have worked well in foreign countries, notably in Denmark, Wurtemberg, and France. The proposal in the Bill to give to boards elected as to two-thirds of their number upon a system which gives representation to the people the power to veto any expenditure on any money placed at the disposal of the department is an absolutely new proposal as regards any legislation ever passed for this country or for Ireland. It is a new departure, and it gives more power to a body with an element of popular election in it than has ever been given before. But the hon. Member for South Mayo, not content with that, desires that a body, the majority of which is practically popularly elected, should have absolute control over the expenditure of £166,000 a year of public money. I do not hesitate to say that no precedent for such a suggestion can be found in any institution of this kind. There is absolutely no precedent for it in any foreign country which has started an agricultural department more or less on the lines we now propose. In every case the administrative and executive power are retained by the central Government. I will go farther. I do not think, quite apart from precedent, that a popularly elected body, the majority of the members of which are elected in various parts of Ireland, is a body which could be properly entrusted with the administration of funds intended for the use of the whole of Ireland. Such a popularly elected body would be totally unfit for executive and adminis-

trative functions, apart from the control of a central body. A body of that kind would be representative of the different counties, and the greater part of the money would be spent in disputing over the amount of money to be allocated to each county. You can only with safety give the administration of such funds as are provided by this Bill to some body which will not be turned in this direction or that by local considerations. The hon. Member has confounded the former Bill with the provisions of the present Bill. He pointed out that the former Bill assigned to the board then proposed to be set up executive and administrative functions. It did so, but then that board was to be wholly nominated by the Government, and formed entirely on the model of the Congested District Board; and considering the machinery at the disposal of the Government at that time the proposals in that Bill were as good as could be tried. But since then a great measure of local government has been passed for Ireland, and it seems to me to be absolutely necessary to base the present proposals on that Act. It would have been possible to have followed the model of the former Bill, but then the element of popular representation would have been dispensed with, and after devoting a great deal of time and consideration to the problem—this is actually the third Bill that has been prepared—I came to the conclusion that the best system to adopt was that giving to the central body administrative and executive powers, enabling this body at the same time to delegate such powers as they desired to other bodies constituted under the Bill, or such public bodies as would usefully exercise such powers. That proposal has been attacked by the hon. Member for Mayo and others.

MR. DILLON: No; I attacked the definition of a public body.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: I would remind the hon. Member that in most countries on the Continent the bodies to which administrative and executive powers are delegated are voluntary agricultural societies. We have not created in this Bill any voluntary agricultural societies, but I would be extremely sorry if the provisions of this Bill prevented the use of these societies as instruments by which the administration of the funds could be

carried out. Of course, we have carefully reserved the power of delegating the functions, not merely to county councils, but to agricultural societies, or even if need be, to the society which seems to arouse the opposition of hon. Members opposite—the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society. While I am speaking of the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society, I must say I cannot commend the hon. Member for East Mayo on his attempts to belittle that society, which he has described as only a “limited liability company.” Does anybody who studies the work of that society accept that as an adequate description of it? The description “limited liability company” usually implies that the work is carried on for the profit of the shareholders; but this society has never made, nor does it seek to make, a profit.

MR. DILLON: I did not suggest that. On the contrary, I know that they have lost £12,000 in four years. I guarded myself against expressing any opinion for or against the association, although I have my own opinion. What I said was simply that it was a limited liability association.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: Yes, but the hon. Member seemed to think that that was a sufficient description of the association and its object. I hold it is not a sufficient description. The work done by the society has been most invaluable, and those who have conducted it have been most unselfish men. When the hon. Member speaks of the society having lost £12,000 during the three or four years of its existence, does he regard that money as lost?

MR. DILLON: If the right hon. Gentleman conducts the Debate by questions I must needs answer. I have not insinuated that the society has sought to make money. I said it had lost money; but, of course, I do not mean that money expended in the cause of benevolence is lost.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: I do not think the hon. Member has made his case any better by his interruption. There could be no doubt I think that the hon. Member from his language meant to disparage the work of the society, and I repeat that the work done by the Agricul-

tural Organisation Society has been most invaluable, that the money spent is not lost, but was expended in the public interest, and there was no intention of its being used otherwise. If I look around the various institutions in Ireland, the one which I should pick out more than another as having done good service to agriculture in Ireland would be the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society; and certainly I will not consent to any modification in the Bill that will prevent the department making use of this society. Now, I come lastly to the question of finance. The hon. Member for East Mayo, and others, have described the financial provisions of the Bill as shabby and inadequate. Well, I am perfectly aware that it is a very difficult matter indeed to satisfy hon. Members from Ireland on questions of the expenditure of public funds in that country. Of course I am not able, as they are, to measure the shabbiness or generosity of the Treasury by reference to the Report of the Financial Relations Commission; and, of course, if hon. Members tell me that Ireland is at the present moment being robbed of three millions per annum, that is an argument which raises questions of contributions from the public funds, and which must naturally weigh with them.

MR. DAVITT: Unionist Members think so, too.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: Probably in such circumstances any contribution which this country may make must appear to them to be inadequate. But we are not in a position to take that view as to what is due to Ireland, and I would remind hon. Members that the House of Commons has twice declined to accept the Report of that Commission as conclusive. I am compelled to measure the benevolence of the Treasury by another standard. I must consider the needs of Ireland, and how far they are likely to be satisfied by the proposals I now make. I know there is a general impression that the money with which the department is being endowed will be altogether inadequate, but I think that that opinion has been largely expressed by those gentlemen, inside and outside of the House, who do not take the trouble to inquire into the facts of the case and as to what has been done elsewhere. The money to

be placed at the disposal of the department is to be divided into two portions—for technical instruction other than agricultural, and for agricultural and rural industries. In England the beer and spirit money, or the residue of it, was appropriated to the purposes of technical education. I have taken the trouble to examine what was the share of that residue which came to be applied in England to the work of technical instruction in towns comparable to county boroughs in Ireland. Bristol, for instance, with a population of 221,000, had during the year 1895-96 as its share £5,735, and Sheffield with 324,000 inhabitants received £5,642, Leeds with 367,000 population £6,470, and Liverpool £17,000 annually. Taking Sheffield as approximating in size and area to Belfast, and Bristol as comparable with Dublin, the result of the comparison shows that under our proposal Belfast, with 300,000 inhabitants, would receive £14,236, a great deal more than twice as much as Sheffield, and Dublin, with £245,000 inhabitants, would receive £11,626, or twice as much as Bristol. On the face of these figures the proposal, so far as technical instruction is concerned, cannot be considered inadequate. The amount to be given to Irish cities in the division of the money on the population basis is more than double that which the English towns receive. I come now to the amount to be given for agriculture and other industries, and here the conclusions to which I am driven are again most remarkable, having regard to the perpetual allegations made as to the inadequacy of the funds we propose to give for that purpose. The fact is that under the Bill Ireland will be most generously treated in that respect as compared with other countries. According to a statistical table published in the report of the Irish Recess Committee on agricultural development, it appears that of the countries mentioned, the central authorities of eight do not spend for agricultural purposes a sum exceeding 8d. per inhabitant annually. On the other hand, there are five countries in which the amount of 8d. is exceeded, viz., Holland, which spends for such purposes every year 12d., Hungary 23d., Austria 10d., Denmark 12d., and France 12d. per inhabitant. However, on investigating the matter more closely by the light of the special reports on the systems of the various countries contained in the same book,

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I find that these calculations must be seriously modified and reduced before the calculation can be held as truly showing the amount spent for agricultural purposes by the central authority in these countries. I need not go more minutely into the figures, but when the proper deductions are made, I find that in Austria the amount is 6d. per head, in Hungary 12d., France 2½d. In Switzerland the amount of 12d. is arrived at by the expenditure of the cantons, as well as by the Federal Council. If that allowance is made, there, also, the amount spent by the central authority is reduced from 12d. to 6d. It remains, therefore, that there are in the whole world only two countries in which the expenditure for agricultural purposes by the central authority amounts to the sum of 12d. per inhabitant. Let me see how Ireland will be treated if this Bill passes. First of all, let me remind the House that £380,000 will be granted for agricultural purposes. That includes the veterinary and the fisheries department, and £66,000 for the Congested Districts Board. The report of the Recess Committee states that if the sum of 1s. per inhabitant was spent for agricultural purposes in Ireland the total amount would be £230,000 per annum, but if this Bill is passed, far more than that amount will be spent in Ireland on agriculture and industries. Apart altogether from the Bill there is at present a total sum of £214,000 a year spent in Ireland for agriculture by various boards, to which there ought to be added the sums allowed to the National Board of Education, and the Intermediate Board, for the teaching of agriculture. The general result, therefore, is, that Ireland would be as generously treated as any country in Europe, whether Denmark, Holland, France, or Prussia, in respect of the amount spent by the central authority for purposes connected with agricultural and rural districts. I think what I have said will bring to the House the conviction that it cannot be said the present proposals are so utterly inadequate as we are in the habit of being told by some of the Irish Members. I do not think they are inadequate. If we were to increase that sum very largely at the present time, it would almost certainly lead to waste and extravagance, and it is far better to commence on a moderate scale. One other complaint has been made by hon. Members this afternoon. It is that these

funds should be drawn entirely from Imperial sources. Now, I cannot myself understand how it can be wrong to expend money out of the Irish Church Surplus Fund for the purposes of agriculture and industry. I cannot conceive any better destination for these funds. What would the hon. Member for East Mayo propose? Is he going to allow that fund to accumulate until he induces the House to pass an Evicted Tenants' Bill? I know he has proposed that. If that was a proper use to make of this money, surely it is a far more appropriate use to make of it to help the struggling farmer. I have done what I could in this matter, I have fought for the fund. I have obtained £78,000 from the Exchequer, and am I on that ground to omit to use funds from other sources? I maintain that the allocation I have made in this Bill of the Church funds, and the funds saved under the new Irish Judicature Act, is a proper and useful allocation until the contrary has been shown. I do not think we are open to the charge that we have derived our funds from improper sources. I think I have met almost all the criticism that has been put forward, and I have very little to add. The object of this Bill is the promotion of the material prosperity of Ireland. That is a policy which from the nature of the case must be regarded by parties on this side of the House as of the highest possible importance, because we have always maintained that the evils from which Ireland suffers are economical rather than political. But I do not desire to suggest that we on this side of the House have in this policy anything like a monopoly. The right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean suggested that the motive that actuated the Government in introducing this proposal was to "kill Home Rule by kindness," that our object in this Bill was not to develop and build up the material prosperity of Ireland, but to kill Home Rule in Ireland. I am not ashamed in the least to say again what I did say four years ago, that if we could kill Home Rule by kindness well and good, but whether we can or cannot do so, we are determined to do what we can to build up the material prosperity of Ireland, and that is what by this Bill we have in view. That is our object in bringing forward this Bill. If it does something to reconcile Ireland in connection with this country, so much the better. It is clear, from the

Debate that has taken place, that hon. Members share the view that this measure is one which offers the possibility of very great benefit to Ireland, and I earnestly appeal to the House to allow the Second Reading to be taken, and also to co-operate with the Government to the utmost of their power in passing the Bill through its remaining stages.

MR. T. M. HEALY: I understand that there will be no opposition to the proposal to refer this Bill to the Grand Committee. I should, therefore, like to ask two or three questions upon matters which have not been dealt with this afternoon. In the Board of Agriculture Act I observe that by the 8th Section the office of President of the Board of Agriculture shall render the person holding the same incapable of being elected to, or voting there as a Member of, the Commons House of Parliament. I would like to ask why it is that a departure from the English model is to be entered upon, and why the Irish president is to have the right of sitting in this House.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: The Minister will occupy a similar position to that of the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade and of the Local Government Board, and neither of those gentlemen vacates his seat at once.

MR. T. M. HEALY: As one who is friendly to this Bill and is most desirous that it should be passed, I would advise the Government in the strongest way to conciliate public opinion in Ireland, and make the gentleman who fills that office go to his constituents for re-election. Now, the criticism that I am going to offer—and I offer it as a friend of the Bill and not as one desiring to delay it for a moment—is that the English Act confers a number of powers on the English Agricultural Department which we have not got in Ireland, and I would especially mention the case of the Ordnance Survey Department. Why should we have to go to the Board of Agriculture in connection with matters relating to the Ordnance Survey Department? This is essentially a case of local administration. I think we ought to claim that every power that is given to the English Board of Agriculture by this Act should be transferred to the Irish Board of Agriculture by the Bill. There

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is one other point which has been already touched upon, and that is the case of the Congested Districts Board. I believe the evils of Ireland are political, and depend for their removal on political measures. Therefore I am bound to regard all these Bills not with unfriendliness but with more or less pessimism as to their effects. At the same time I should be the last to offer any opposition whatever to what I feel to be a genuine attempt on the part of the Government to pass this Bill. This is not the first occasion that I have had to observe that the right hon. Gentleman has given help in this direction, because when I was endeavouring to pass a Bill some time since I received the utmost consideration and assistance from the right hon. Gentleman and his colleagues. With regard to the Congested Districts Board, why is not the Congested Districts Board placed under this Department? I think it is a mischievous thing that a body like the Congested Districts Board should be allowed to shovel up hundreds of thousands of pounds, as in the case of Lord Dillon's estate, without a single person knowing why the purchase was made, what has become of the money, whether it was a good bargain or not, who were the persons at the back of it, and without having a chance of getting at the minutes of the Board. There is one other observation I should like to make. The right hon. Gentleman has suggested that it was said on this side of the House that there is an improper allocation of public money. I do not think that anyone has suggested that, but we do say that every shilling—every sixpence—spent under this Bill is Irish money, either earmarked for Irish purposes, or coming out of an Irish fund. Therefore, while I thank the right hon. Gentleman for the care he has given to this subject; and while we owe him something for his action, it is not to British benevolence that we are indebted for the money which is about to be spent. But I would especially draw attention to the sum of £78,000 as to which we are entitled to some more sufficient answer than the right hon. Gentleman has already given. The Nationalist schoolmasters of Ireland are considerably exercised in their minds as to this expenditure of £78,000. The right hon. Gentleman has endeavoured to quiet their minds by stating that they would get it back in another direction. I am quite

sure he believes that, but I believe it is a Treasury trick, and I will give the House the reason why. It is perfectly clear that this £78,000 a year, if it is to be made up to the National teacher, must be made up by Bill.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: By Vote.

MR. T. M. HEALY: By Vote? Very well then, by Vote. If it is to be made up by Vote, are there to be new conditions saddling these National schoolmasters because they are fighting the Treasury by Petition of Right in Ireland? At the present moment there is a lawsuit pending as to the rights of these teachers and whether they have been properly treated by the Treasury. If it is intended to leave this £78,000 unconditionally in the pockets of these men, why is it taken away from them with one hand only to be given them with another? Surely it is the merest financial juggling to say that the annual sum of £78,000 is to be paid out of the local taxation account to be devoted to the purposes of this Bill, if you are going to give them £78,000 by a supplementary Estimate. Why not give it them by supplementary Estimate for the purposes of this Bill?

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: The reason why this proposal is made is to bring Ireland into line with England and Scotland. The beer and spirit money in England and Scotland is devoted partly to general local purposes and partly to technical instruction. We desire that this sum should in Ireland be devoted to technical instruction, and the corresponding sums should be supplied out of a Vote of money to the Commissioners of Education to carry out the intentions of the Act of 1890. I can assure the hon. Member that there is no desire to defraud the teachers in any way.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Will any new conditions be imposed on the teachers?

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: I do not know whether what is known as the "results" system will be allowed to remain or not. Personally, I think it is desirable to modify it, and that some change may be necessary. I think the hon. Member may take it that the interests of the teachers will not be allowed to suffer.

MR. T. M. HEALY: It would have been most unfair by a side wind to affect

the position of the National teachers *via* the Agriculture Bill. I accept the statement of the hon. Gentleman, and I think it will be accepted by the teachers that nothing prejudicial to their position will be done. But if it turns out upon examination that such prejudice might arise, I, for my part, will claim that the House of Commons is bound to see that no prejudice is allowed to be committed. That is the observation which I rose to make. I do trust the right hon. Gentleman will remember, in dealing with Amendments in the Grand Committee, that he is dealing with an Irish fund, and therefore that the Irish Members, be they whom they may—and I think in this matter I can speak for Conservative as well as Nationalist Members, because I do not think there will be any division of opinion between them—but Irish opinion in this Grand Committee ought to be supreme, because it is Irish money; and so saying I wish this Bill a prosperous passage through the Grand Committee.

MR. WILLIAM MOORE (Antrim, N.): I should like to say a very few words on this subject, because my constituents are much interested in it. I observe a desire on the part of hon. Members on the opposite side of the House to speak, and I shall therefore make very few remarks indeed. But I wish to give an assurance to the Chief Secretary of the acclamation with which the people in the north of Ireland have received this Bill. A very important principle in this Bill is laid down in the section which provides that, except in special circumstances, the assistance which the Bill is going to give for local purposes must be made in the first instance by local money. That is the best way of making people who want help help themselves. But I venture respectfully to differ from the Chief Secretary with respect to certain other points of the Bill. It seems to me that if this Bill is to do any good, it must be for local purposes, and the best judges of local purposes are the local committees which we find in the provincial councils. Suppose a question arises as to the butter-making industry, of which Limerick is the centre, I think members of the committees representing the North of Ireland would have a very poor knowledge of the requirements of the industry. Similarly, the members representing the South would have no knowledge of the requirements of the

flax industry in the North. It seems to me, therefore, that the best way would be to place more reliance on the local committees in these matters rather than on a general board—which I think would be unwieldy—for the whole of Ireland. Let the provincial committees, with a central authority, administer the Act. But if they are to administer the Act, they ought to have control of their own funds, and have sufficient money to spend.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, W.): I only desire to make one remark. I think the reference that was made to the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society was not just. I myself happen to be a member of the committee of that society, and I know that it is composed of gentlemen of all religions and politics in Ireland. It is strictly non-political, it has done a great deal of good work, and I know many gentlemen connected with it who have spent large sums of money out of their own resources in connection with its work. That being so, I think it is only fair, as a member of the committee, that I should make this statement.

*MR. HEMPHILL (Tyrone, W.): At this late hour I have only one word I desire to say. We are all unanimous in wishing that this Bill shall be read a second time, and I merely rise, sitting where I do, because it might be supposed that on the one hand I did not sympathise with the objects of the Bill, or on the other, that I gave entire approval to the measure as it stands. While I think the principle of the Bill is good, and while it is desirable to do everything to benefit technical and agricultural education in Ireland, which has been so much neglected, in detail this Bill is highly objectionable, and it will be very necessary, to whatever Committee it may go, that it should be very closely watched, especially by the Irish Members. It is a Bill full of detail which an English or Scotch Member could not properly appreciate, and I would instance one point in the constitution of the department which strikes me as most objectionable. According to the statement of the Chief Secretary we might as well not have a Parliamentary Vice-President at all, because he is to be either in a room at Dublin Castle unless when engaged at St. Stephen's on the occasion of an important Parliamentary Division, or in connec-

tion with Irish business. But there is another absurdity with regard to the department, which I do not think I ever saw creep into any other statute among the many absurdities which we often meet with, and that is the clause to the effect that any power or duty of the department may be performed by the president or vice-president or by any person appointed by the president to act on behalf of the vice-president. By this clause a power is given to the president to delegate important duties to any underling in Dublin, and it seems to me extraordinary that such a power should be placed in the president's hands. But while I disapprove of many of the clauses I heartily endorse the principle of the Bill.

Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be committed to a Standing Committee on Trade, etc."—(*Mr. G. W. Balfour.*)

MR. DILLON: I venture to suggest that in referring the Bill to the Standing Committee an addition should be made to the number of Irish Members who are on that Committee. There are a great many of us who are not on the Standing Committee, and I think it would be unfair for this Bill to pass through the Committee without giving the Irish Members a full opportunity of proposing Amendments or of considering the Bill more in detail.

MR. G. W. BALFOUR: That is a matter over which the Government has no control.

Question put and agreed to.

BOARD OF EDUCATION [SALARIES.]

Resolution reported—

"That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of a salary, not exceeding £2,000, to the President of the Board of Education, and of salaries and remuneration to the secretaries, officers, and servants of the Board, in pursuance of any Act of the present session to provide for the establishment of a Board of Education for England and Wales."

Resolution agreed to.

SEA FISHERIES REGULATION (SCOTLAND) ACT (1895) AMENDMENT BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. William Moore

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham): I beg to ask for some explanation of the Bill. It is impossible to understand it as it stands now, because it seems to be legislation by reference.

MR. CROMBIE (Kincardineshire): The Bill is simply to remedy a mistake in the Act of 1895. At present if there is any objection raised by any of the local authorities the board could not be established. What we want under this Bill is to be placed on the same footing as England, and that is the whole object of the Bill.

MR. BANBURY moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned;" but Mr.

SPEAKER, being of opinion that the motion was an abuse of the Rules of the House, declined to propose the question thereupon to the House.

MR. GALLOWAY (Manchester, S.W.): In view of the fact that this Bill has come on quite by surprise, and also that the Lord Advocate is not in his place, I do not think that we can proceed to the Second Reading without some explanation, and I therefore hope we shall go to a Division against it.

Question put, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

The House divided:—Ayes, 125; Noes, 170. (Division List, No. 222.)

AYES.

Abraham, Wm. (Cork, N.E.)
Allan, William (Gateshead)
Allen, Wm. (Newc. under Lyme)
Allhusen, A. Henry Eden
Allison, Robert Andrew
Ambrose, Robert
Asquith, R. Hon. H. Henry
Austin, M
Baird, J. G. Alexander
Bayley, Thomas (Derbyshire)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Begg, Ferdinand Faithfull
Billson, Alfred
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Broadhurst, Henry
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Sir C. (Glasgow)
Carvill, P. G. Hamilton
Channing, Francis Allston
Clark, Dr. G. B. (Caithness-sh.)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Colville, John
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Crilly, Daniel
Curran, Thomas B. (Donegal)
Curran, Thomas (Sligo, S.)
Davitt, Michael
Denny, Colonel
Dillon, John
Doogan, P. C.
Doughty, George
Douglas, Charles M. (Lanark)
Doxford, William Theodore
Dunn, Sir William
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Evans, Samuel T. (Glamorgan)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (Leith)
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Flannery, Sir Fortescue

Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir W. (Derby Co.)
Gordon, Hon. John Edward
Gull, Sir Cameron
Harwood, George
Hastett, Sir James Horner
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Healy, Timothy M. (N. Louth)
Hemphill, Rt. Hon. Charles H.
Hoare, Samuel (Norwich)
Hogan, James Francis
Holden, Sir Angus
Holland, Wm. H. (York, W.R.)
Horniman, Frederick John
Johnson-Ferguson, Jabez Ed.
Johnston, William (Belfast)
Jones, David B. (Swansea)
Jones, W. (Carnarvonshire)
Kay-Shuttleworth, Rt. Hon. Sir U.
Kitson, Sir James
Lambert, George
Langley, Batty
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (Cumb'land)
Leng, Sir John
Lewis, John Herbert
Logan, John William
Lucas-Shadwell, William
Macaleese, Daniel
MacDonnell, Dr. M. A. (Qu'ns C.)
Maclean, James Mackenzie
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
McEwan, William
McGhee, Richard
McKenna, Reginald
McKillop, James
McLaren, Charles Benjamin
Mappin, Sir F. T.
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Mendl, Sigismund Ferdinand
Molloy, Bernard Charles
Nicol, Donald Ninian
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien, James F. X. (Cork)

O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, Arthur (Donegal)
O'Connor, Jas. (Wicklow, W.)
Oldroyd, Mark
Palmer, Sir C. M. (Durham)
Pickard, Benjamin
Pilkington, Sir G. A. (Lancs SW)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Briggs (Yorks.)
Provand, Andrew Dryburgh
Redmond, William (Clare)
Richardson, J. (Durham, S. E.)
Roberts, John Bryn (Eifion)
Schwann, Charles E.
Seely, Charles Hilton
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Thomas (Hawick B.)
Sidebotham, J. W. (Cheshire)
Sinclair, Louis (Romford)
Steadman, William Charles
Stephens, Henry Charles
Strachey, Edward
Sullivan, Donal (Westmeath)
Talbot, Rt. Hon. J. G. (Oxf'd Uni.)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, David Alf. (Merthyr)
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Walton, Jno. Lawson (Leeds, S.)
Wedderburn, Sir William
Wills, Sir William Henry
Wilson, Charles Henry (Hull)
Wilson, John (Falkirk)
Wilson, John (Govan)
Woodhouse, Sir J. T. (Huddersf'd)
Woods, Samuel
Young, Samuel (Cavan, East)
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Captain Sinclair and Mr.
Crombie.

NOES.

Allsop, Hon. George
 Anstruther, H. T.
 Archdale, Edward Mervyn
 Arnold, Alfred
 Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
 Arrol, Sir William
 Bagot, Capt. Joceline FitzRoy
 Balcarres, Lord
 Barnes, Frederic Gorell
 Barry, Rt. Hon. A. H. Smith-(Hunt)
 Barton, Dunbar Plunket
 Bathurst, Hon. Allen B.
 Beckett, Ernest William
 Bethell, Commander
 Bhowaggrree, Sir M. M.
 Blakiston-Houston, John
 Blundell, Colonel Henry
 Boscawen, Arthur Griffiths
 Bowles, T. G. (King's Lynn)
 Brodric, Rt. Hon. St. John
 Brookfield, A. Montagu
 Bullard, Sir Harry
 Butcher, John George
 Campbell, Rt. Hon. J. A. (Gl'sg'w)
 Campbell, J. H. M. (Dublin)
 Carlile, William Walter
 Cavendish, R. F. (N. Lancs.)
 Cayzer, Sir Charles William
 Cecil, Evelyn (Hertford, East)
 Chaloner, Captain R. G. W.
 Chamberlain, J. A. (Worc'r)
 Charrington, Spencer
 Chelsea, Viscount
 Clarke, Sir Edward (Plymouth)
 Coddington, Sir William
 Coghill, Douglas Harry
 Cohen, Benjamin Louis
 Collings, Right Hon. Jesse
 Cook, Fred Lucas (Lambeth)
 Cox, Irwin E. Bainbridge
 Cranborne, Viscount
 Crosse, Herbert S. (Bolton)
 Currie, Sir Donald
 Curzon, Viscount
 Dalbiac, Colonel Philip Hugh
 Digby, J. K. D. Wingfield-
 Dorington, Sir John Edward
 Drucker, A.
 Duncombe, Hon. Hubert V.
 Fardell, Sir T. George
 Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
 Finch, George H.
 Firbank, Joseph Thomas
 Fisher, William Hayes
 FitzGerald, Sir R. Penrose
 Fitz Wygram, General Sir F.
 Fletcher, Sir Henry
 Foster, Colonel (Lancaster)

Garfit, William
 Gedge, Sydney
 Gibbs, Hon. Vicary (St. Albans)
 Giles, Charles Tyrrell
 Goldsworthy, Major-General
 Goulding, Edward Alfred
 Gray, Ernest (West Ham)
 Greene, Henry D. (Shrewsbury)
 Gretton, John
 Greville, Hon. Ronald
 Gunter, Colonel
 Hall, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
 Halsey, Thomas Frederick
 Hanbury, Rt. Hon. Robert W.
 Hanson, Sir Reginald
 Hare, Thomas Leigh
 Heath, James
 Heaton, John Henniker
 Helder, Augustus
 Henderson, Alexander
 Hobhouse, Henry
 Howell, William Tudor
 Hubbard, Hon. Evelyn
 Hutton, John (Yorks, N.R.)
 Jackson, Rt. Hon. W. Lawies
 Jenkins, Sir John Jones
 Jessel, Captain Herbert M.
 Johnstone, Heywood (Sussex)
 Jolliffe, Hon. H. George
 Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
 Kenyon, James
 Keswick, William
 King, Sir Henry Seymour
 Knowles, Lees
 Laurie, Lieut. General
 Lawrence, Sir E. D. (Corn.)
 Leigh-Bennett, Henry Currie
 Leighton, Stanley
 Loder, Gerald Walter E.
 Lopes, Henry Yarde Buller
 Lorne, Marquess of
 Lowe, Francis William
 Loyd, Archie Kirkman
 Macdonald, John Cumming
 Maclure, Sir John William
 Marks, Henry Hananel
 Massey-Mainwaring, Hon. W. F.
 Mellor, Colonel (Lancashire)
 Melville, Beresford Valentine
 Middlesmore, John T.
 Monk, Charles James
 Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (Hants.)
 Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
 Moore, William (Antrim, N.)
 More, R. Jasper (Shropshire)
 Morgan, Hn. F. (Monmouthsh.)
 Morton, A. H. A. (Deptford)
 Murray, Col. Wyndham (Bath)

Myers, William Henry
 Newark, Viscount
 Newdigate, Francis Alexander
 O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
 Pender, Sir James
 Percy, Earl
 Philippotts, Captain Arthur
 Pilkington, R. (Lancs, Newton)
 Platt-Higgins, Frederick
 Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
 Priestley, Sir W. Overend (Edin)
 Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
 Rankin, Sir James
 Richardson, Sir Thos. (Hartlep'l)
 Ridley, Rt. Hon. Sir Matt. W.
 Ritchie, Rt. Hon. Chas. Thomson
 Robertson, Herbert (Hackney)
 Robinson, Brooke
 Rothschild, Hon. Lionel W.
 Russell, T. W. (Tyrone)
 Rutherford, John
 Samuel, Harry S. (Limehouse)
 Sanderson, Rt. Hon. Col. E. J.
 Sidebottom, W. (Denbighsh.)
 Simeon, Sir Barrington
 Skewes-Cox, Thomas
 Spencer, Ernest
 Stanley, Hn. Arthur (Ormskirk)
 Stanley, Edw. Jas. (Somerset)
 Stanley, Lord (Lancs)
 Stone, Sir Benjamin
 Start, Hon. Humphry Napier
 Sutherland, Sir Thomas
 Thornton, Percy M.
 Tomlinson, Wm. Edw. Murray
 Tritton, Charles Ernest
 Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard
 Walrond, Rt. Hon. Sir William H.
 Ward, Hon. Robert A. (Crewe)
 Warde, Lieut. Col. C. E. (Kent)
 Welby, Lieut. Col. A. C. E.
 Whitmore, Charles Algernon
 Williams, Colonel R. (Dorset)
 Williams, Joseph Powell-(Birm)
 Willox, Sir John Archibald
 Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
 Wodehouse, Rt. Hon. E. R. (Bath)
 Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
 Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
 Wyndham, George
 Wyndham-Quinn, Major W. H.
 Wyvill, Marmaduke D'Arcy
 Yerburgh, Robert Armstrong
 Younger, William

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
 Mr. Galloway and Mr.
 Banbury.

STOLEN GOODS BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed—

“That the Bill be now read a second time.”
 —(Sir Howard Vincent.)

MR. T. M. HEALY: I hope the hon.
 Member for Sheffield will not persist in
 this mischievous Bill.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield,
 Central): It does not affect Ireland.

MR. T. M. HEALY: Yes, it does; it
 is a most mischievous Bill.

It being after half-past Five of the clock,
 the Order was deferred till Wednesday
 next.

Adjourned at twenty minutes before
 Six of the clock.

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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

[AUTHORISED EDITION].

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Bills : Read First, Second, or Third Time = 1R., 2R., 3R. [c.] = Commons. [L.] = Lords.
Amendt. = Amendment. *Os.* = Observations. *Qs.* = Questions. *As.* = Answers.
Com. = Committee. *Con.* = Consideration. *Rep.* = Report. *S.* = Debate in Committee
of Supply. Where in the Index * is added with Reading of a Bill, or a Vote in Committee
of Supply, it indicates that no Debate took place on that Stage of the Bill, or on that Vote.
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Q. Mr. J. M. Maclean; A. Mr. J. Chamberlain, *June 29*, 976.
- HOGAN, DOMINICK, PENSION**
Q. Mr. Flavin; A. Mr. J. P. Williams, *June 22*, 264.
- HOGAN, Mr. J. F.** [Tipperary, Mid]
Anticosti, Island of, disturbances, *June 20*, 60.
Australasian Federation—Introduction of Bill, *June 27*, 762.
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- HOLYROOD PALACE, HOURS OF CLOSING**
Q. Mr. Weir; A. Mr. Akers-Douglas, *June 23*, 443.
- HOME OFFICE**
Secretary of State—Rt. Hon. Sir M. W. Ridley.
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- HOPKINS, MICHAEL, CASE OF**
Q. Mr. J. P. Farrell; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *June 22*, 280.
- HOSPITAL ACCOMMODATION IN DUKE STREET PRISON, GLASGOW**—Case of Mary Carroll
Q. Mr. J. P. Smith; A. Mr. A. G. Murray, *June 26*, 594.
- HOSPITALS, DUBLIN**, Report presented, *June 23*, 433.
- HOUSES—Tenure of Houses Abroad, Report**
Q. Mr. Field; A. Mr. Brodrick, *July 4*, 1412.

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HOUSES OF PARLIAMENTLicensing Exemption [Houses of Parliament] Bill, *See that Title.*

Liquor, Sale of, in the Precincts of the House of Commons

Q. Sir W. Lawson; A. Viscount Valentia, *June 29, 993.***HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES**Bethnal Green Schools—Re-housing of displaced persons, *See Bethnal Green Schools.*Cottage Homes Bill, *See that Title.***Housing of the Working Classes Provisional Order [Borrow-Stounness] Bill**1. 2R.* *June 22, 231.*Com.* *June 23, 373.*3R.* *June 26, 531.***HUGHES, COL. E. [Woolwich]**Small Houses [Acquisition of Ownership] Bill, *Con., June 28, 913; July 3, 1346.***HULL, SMALLPOX EPIDEMIC**Q. Mr. R. G. Webster; A. Mr. T. W. Russell, *June 29, 993; Q. Mr. R. G. Webster; A. Mr. Chaplin, June 30, 1144.***Hull, Barnsley and West Riding Junction Railway and Dock Bill**1. *Royal Assent, June 20, 2.***HUMPHREYS-OWEN, MR. A. C. [Montgomery]**Improvement of Land Bill, 2R., *July 4, 1480.*Secondary Education—Board of Education Bill, 2R., *June 26, 682.***Ilford Gas Bill**1. *Royal Assent, June 20, 1.***ILLICIT COMMISSIONS, *See Prevention of Corruption Bill.*****IMPRISONMENT, *See Fine or Imprisonment [Scotland and Ireland] Bill.*****Improvement of Land Bill**c. 2R., *July 4, 1479.***INCE COLLIERY, TIMBERING ACCIDENT—Death of J. Almond**Qs. Mr. Woods, Col. Blundell; As. Sir M. W. Ridley, *June 27, 771.***INCOME AND EXPENDITURE, *See Revenue and Expenditure.*****INDIA**

Secretary of State—Rt. Hon. Lord G. Hamilton.

Army, Staff Corps Candidates—Age limit
Q. Col. Welby; A. Lord G. Hamilton, *June 22, 266.***INDIA—cont.****Budget**Q. Sir W. Wedderburn; A. Mr. A. J. Balfour, *June 22, 289.***Burmese Woman, Outrage on, by British Soldiers at Rangoon**Q. Mr. MacNeill; A. Lord G. Hamilton, *June 22, 266.***Ceylon, *See that Title.*****Contagious Diseases — Petition against State Regulation, *June 27, 757.*****Cooper's Hill Engineering Officers' Retirement**Q. Sir S. King; A. Mr. Brodrick, *July 4, 1410.***Criminal Jurisdiction—Bargha Shiranis Country**Q. Mr. J. H. Roberts; A. Lord G. Hamilton, *June 30, 1139.***Currency Committee—Index and Appendices presented, *July 3, 1232, 1270.*****Inoculation against Disease**Q. Sir C. Cameron; A. Lord G. Hamilton, *June 20, 62.***Land Revenue**Q. Sir H. H. Fowler; A. Lord G. Hamilton, *June 23, 438.***Medical Regulations — Female Hospital Assistants**Q. Mr. Stuart; A. Lord G. Hamilton, *June 30, 1139.***North-west Frontier Campaigns****Dum-dum Bullet**Q. Mr. Dillon; A. Lord G. Hamilton, *June 27, 760.***Regiments on Active Service, Engagements inscribed on Colours**Q. Maj. Rasch; A. Mr. Wyndham, *June 23, 435.***Poona Disturbances — Imprisonment of Natu Brothers**Q. Mr. Davitt; A. Lord G. Hamilton, *June 29, 974.***Railways****Guaranteed and Subsidised Railways — Net Earnings**Q. Mr. J. H. Roberts; A. Lord G. Hamilton, *June 30, 1138.*Report presented, *June 29, 944, 965.***Raipur—Zemindar's Grievances**Q. Mr. H. Roberts; A. Lord G. Hamilton, *July 3, 1272.***Waziri Raids**Q. Mr. H. Roberts; A. Lord G. Hamilton, *June 23, 439.***INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS, *See Reformatory Schools Amendment Bill.*****Inebriates Act [1898] Amendment Bill**c. 2R., *June 21, 227.***Infant Orphan Asylum Bill**1. *Royal Assent, June 20, 2.*

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**Infectious Disease [Notification] Act
[1889] Extension Bill***l. Royal Assent, June 20, 1.***INISHEA POLICE***Q. Mr. Crilly ; A. Mr. W. G. Balfour,
June 23, 454.***INOCULATION AGAINST DISEASE IN INDIA***Q. Sir C. Cameron ; A. Lord G. Hamilton,
June 20, 62.***INSURANCE—Invalid and Old Age Insurance
Bill [Germany] Translation of, etc.***Q. Sir J. Leng ; A. Mr. Brodrick, June 20,
63.***INTERMEDIATE EDUCATION, IRELAND, Rules
and Programme of Examinations for 1900,
presented, June 28, 874 ; June 29, 945.****INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON TUBERCULOSIS,
Sir H. Maxwell's Report presented, June
27, 758.****INTOXICATING LIQUORS, See Liquor Traffic
and Liquor Licensing Laws.****INVALID AND OLD AGE INSURANCE BILL
[GERMANY], TRANSLATION OF, ETC.***Q. Sir J. Leng ; A. Mr. Brodrick, June 20,
63.***INVER WATER SUPPLY***Q. Mr. Weir ; A. Mr. A. G. Murray, June
30, 1145.***Inverness Harbour Bill***c. Con.* June 27, 755.**3R.* June 30, 1131.**l. Commons Amends. July 4, 1389.***Ionian Bank Bill***c. Rep.* June 20, 57.**3R.* June 23, 400.**l. 1R.* June 23, 372.***IRELAND***Lord Lieutenant—Earl Cadogan.**Chief Secretary—Rt. Hon. G. W. Balfour.**Attorney-General—Rt. Hon. J. Atkinson.**Solicitor-General—Mr. D. P. Barton.**Agrarian Offences—Return presented, June
23, 433 ; June 26, 532.**Agricultural Grant, Cavan—Lough Erne
Drainage Charges**Q. Mr. J. P. Farrell ; A. Mr. G. W.
Balfour, June 20, 73.**Agriculture and Technical Instruction
[Ireland] Bill, see that Title.**Ardagh Cathedral, Preservation of Ruins
Q. Mr. J. P. Farrell ; A. Mr. Hanbury,
June 20, 67.**Armagh Workhouse Administration—
Case of C. McKenna**Q. Mr. E. M'Hugh ; A. Mr. G. W.
Balfour, June 26, 604.***IRELAND—cont.***Aughnacloy Dispensary District**Qs. Mr. Macaleese ; As. Mr. G. W.
Balfour, June 22, 288 ; June 23,
454 ; June 29, 994.**Belfast, Cork, Dublin, etc., See those
Titles.**Belmullet Coastguard Station—New Police
Station**Q. Mr. Crilly ; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour,
June 23, 454.**Bills relating to—Business of the House**Q. Mr. Dillon ; A. Mr. A. J. Balfour,
June 26, 605**See also Title of Bills.**Butler Estate, Sale of — Inspection of
Holdings, etc.**Q. Mr. P. O'Brien ; A. Mr. G. W.
Balfour, June 29, 996.**Carrickmacross Fever Hospital, Appoint-
ment of Medical Officer**Q. Mr. Daly ; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour,
June 23, 448.**Castlecomer and Killaloe Railway Faci-
lities**Q. Mr. Field ; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour,
June 29, 998.**Cavan, See that Title.**Celtic Gold Ornaments, Restoring to
Ireland**Q. Sir T. Esmonde ; A. Mr. A. J.
Balfour, June 23, 453.**S., June 30, 1194.**Celtic Language, teaching in Irish Schools**Q. Mr. Flavin ; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour,
June 22, 284.**Charitable Donations and Bequests Office,
Vote for, June 30, 1159 ; July 3, 1387.**Civil Service Rules**Q. Mr. T. M. Healy ; A. Mr. G. W.
Balfour, June 23, 453.**Clare Co. Judicial Rents—Delay in fixing**Q. Mr. W. Redmond ; A. Mr. G. W.
Balfour, July 3, 1284.**Clogher Rate Collector, Appointment of
Miss Magill, S., June 30, 1200.**Colins, T., Convict, Release of**Q. Mr. Flavin ; A. Mr. G. W.
Balfour, June 23, 452.**Congested Districts Board, See that Title.**Constabulary, Royal Irish, See that Title.**County Councils**Kerry—Food and Drugs Bills, Resolu-
tion**Q. Mr. Flavin ; A. Mr. G. W.
Balfour, June 22, 287.**Louth—Carlingford Contractor as
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Atkinson, June 23, 277.**County Court Officers—Clerical Assist-
ance, Return, June 20, 60, 159.**County Surveyorships Examinations**Q. Capt. Donelan ; A. Mr. G. W.
Balfour, July 3, 1285.*

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Criminal Prosecutions and other Law Charges, Vote for, *June 22*, 306.

Crown Solicitor—Chief Solicitor, Discharge of Post of Second Assistant, Treasury Minute presented, *July 5*, 1514.

Dillon Estate, Purchase of—Net Rental
Q. Mr. T. M. Healy; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *June 22*, 281.

District Councils and Legal Work
Q. Mr. Flavin; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *June 27*, 778.

Downpatrick, *See that Title.*

Dublin and Dublin Castle, *See those Titles.*

Dundalk Postmaster, Appointment of
Q. Mr. Macaleese; A. Mr. Hanbury, *June 29*, 982.

Dungannon Court House, Vehicle Regulations—Sir F. Brady's Order
Q. Mr. Doogan; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *June 29*, 997.

Ecclesiastical Lands—Rent payable to Land Commission
Q. Mr. O'Neill; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *June 30*, 1152.

Edgworthstown Loan Fund Society, Mismanagement—Compensation to Debenture-holders
Q. Mr. J. P. Farrell; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *June 20*, 74.

Education, *For Collective Heading see Education—Irish Questions.*

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Brennan, Widow, Case of, *S.*, *June 22*, 309, 315.

Finegan Case
Q. Mr. Macaleese; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *June 22*, 283.

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Firearms, Carrying—Case of J. Cahillane
Q. Mr. Flavin; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *June 20*, 72.

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Four Courts, Dublin—Library, *S.*, *June 30*, 1192.

Glebe Loan Borrowers, *S.*, *June 30*, 1184.

Glenties Fever Outbreak—Guardians' Liability for burning infected houses, *S.*, *June 30*, 1194.

Gun Licences—Veterinary Inspectors
Q. Mr. P. O'Brien; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *June 20*, 71.

Harrigan, Bridget, Case of
Qs. Mr. Morris, Mr. J. Lowther, Mr. T. M. Healy, Mr. Dillon; As. Mr. Atkinson, *June 22*, 278.

Hassett's Estate, Valuation, etc.
Q. Mr. M. Healy; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *June 23*, 447.

Hogan's, Dominick, Pension
Q. Mr. Flavin; A. Mr. J. P. Williams, *June 22*, 264.

Hopkins, Michael, Case of
Q. Mr. J. P. Farrell; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *June 22*, 280.

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Intermediate Education—Rules and Programme of Examinations for 1900, presented, *June 28*, 874; *June 29*, 945.

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Jury Packing, alleged, *S.*, *June 22*, 319, 326, 330, 333, 341, 357.

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Kilkenny Grand Jury Secretary, Salary of
Q. Mr. P. O'Brien; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *June 26*, 605.

Kilkenny Postmen's Pay
Q. Mr. P. O'Brien; A. Mr. Hanbury, *July 3*, 1281.

Killadroy Loan Fund Bank
Q. Mr. Flavin; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *June 27*, 777.

Killarney Union, Distress in—Relief Works
Q. Mr. J. P. Farrell; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *June 20*, 75.

Killarney Lakes—Purchase of Herbert Estate proposed, Grosvenor House meeting
Qs. Mr. Flavin; As. Mr. A. J. Balfour, *June 20*, 75; *June 23*, 456.

Kilmallock Land Appeals
Q. Mr. P. O'Brien; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *July 3*, 1287.

Knockninny Post Office, Removal of
Q. Mr. Jordan; A. Mr. Hanbury, *June 23*, 446.

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Land Improvement Loan in Roscommon, Inspector
Q. Mr. P. O'Brien; A. Mr. Hanbury, *July 3*, 1281.

Land Judges' Court, Work of
Q. Mr. Flavin; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *June 22*, 282.

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Q. Mr. J. P. Farrell; A. Mr. Hanbury, *June 22*, 275.

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Q. Mr. Pinkerton; A. Mr. Hanbury, *June 22*, 274.

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Local Government Act, Working of, *S.*, *June 30*, 1222.

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Local Government Finance—Increase in Labour and Expense under New Rules

Q. Mr. J. P. Farrell; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *June 20*, 74; Q. Mr. T. M. Healy; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *June 22*, 280.

Local Taxation Area—Ballyshannon District, *S.*, *June 30*, 1220.

Londonderry History and Ordnance Survey, Publication of, etc.

Q. Mr. Tuite; A. Mr. Hanbury, *June 29*, 982.

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- Longford Land Commission Sitings, Postponement of
Q. Mr. J. P. Farrell ; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, June 23, 449.
- Lord Lieutenant's Household, Vote for,
June 30, 1157 ; July 3, 1387.
- Lough Erne Drainage Charges
Q. Mr. J. P. Farrell ; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, June 20, 73.
- McHale v. Sullivan, *See that Title.*
- Medical Fees
Q. Mr. Blake ; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, July 3, 1286.
- Military District, Cork, *See Cork.*
- Military Works Bill, Expenditure under
Q. Mr. Crilly ; A. Mr. Wyndham, June 23, 436.
- National School Teachers, *See that Title.*
- Newbliss Postmen's Salary
Q. Mr. J. H. Johnstone ; A. Mr. Hanbury, June 29, 986.
- Nugent Estate, Sale of, Delay in
Q. Mr. Tuite ; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, June 29, 997.
- Paupers, Deportation of, *See Paupers.*
- Peace Preservation Act, 1881—Importation of Arms and Ammunition, Orders in Council presented, *June 23, 433 ; June 26, 533.*
- Poor Rate—Tenants rated under £4
Q. Mr. J. P. Farrell ; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, June 23, 450.
- Post Office, *For Collective Heading see Post Office—Irish Questions.*
- Public Works Office, Vote for, *June 30, 1181 ; July 3, 1388.*
- Queen's Colleges
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Qs. Mr. Pinkerton, Mr. MacNeill ; As. Mr. G. W. Balfour, June 22, 286 ; Q. Mr. E. M'Hugh ; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, June 26, 603.
- Vote for, *June 23, 458.*
- Railways
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Q. Mr. Flavin ; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, June 23, 451.
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- Record Office, Vote for, *June 30, 1160 ; July 3, 1387.*
- Records, Access to, *S., June 30, 1160.*
- Registrar-General's Office, Vote for, *June 30, 1178 ; July 3, 1387.*
- Road Contractors' Sureties
Q. Mr. Daly ; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, June 23, 448.
- Roman Catholic University, *See that Title.*
- Rosslea, Telegraph Office, proposed
Q. Mr. Jordan ; A. Mr. Hanbury, June 22, 276.
- Scientific Investigation, etc., Vote for,
July 3, 1388.

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- Shannon, Lower, Tourist Traffic on
S., June 30, 1183.
- Tara, Ruins of—Illegal Excavation
Qs. Mr. J. P. Farrell, Mr. W. Johnston ; As. Mr. Hanbury, June 20, 73.
- Tithe Rent-charge, *See that Title.*
- Training Ship for Tarbert Harbour, proposed
Q. Mr. Flavin ; A. Mr. Goschen, June 20, 60.
- Tramways and Public Companies Act, etc., Payments under, Vote for, *July 3, 1386.*
- Trinity College, Dublin, Engineering Degree — Qualification for Posts under Land Commission
Q. Mr. Lecky ; A. Mr. Hanbury, June 20, 66.
- Vaccination—Supply of Glycerinated Calf Lymph
Q. Sir T. Esmonde ; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, June 29, 996.
- Valuation and Boundary Survey, Vote for,
June 30, 1178 ; July 3, 1387.
- Water Supply—Bundoran, Castlereagh, and Claremorris, charges, etc.
Q. Mr. MacNeill ; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, June 22, 286 ; Q. Mr. Davitt ; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, June 27, 778 ; Q. Mr. Dillon ; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, June 27, 779.
- S., June 30, 1219.*
- Workhouse Infirmaries
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Q. Mr. Macaleese ; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, June 30, 1151.
- Trained Nurses, *S., June 30, 1222, 1224.*

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Isolation Hospitals [Amendment] Bill

- l. Com., June 22, 233.*
Rep. June 30, 1122.*
3R. July 3, 1263.*
c. 1R. July 5, 1515.*

ITALIAN LANGUAGE, Proposed Abolition of, in Maltese Law Courts
*Q. Mr. Davitt ; A. Mr. J. Chamberlain, July 3, 1276.*J. W. TAYLOR, s.s., losses of Cattle—Conveyance of Animals prohibited
*Qs. Mr. Field, Mr. Allan ; As. Mr. Long, July 4, 1415.*Order revoked—Presented, *June 26, 533, 587.*JACKAL, H.M.S.—Crew's Leave of Absence
*Q. Mr. Weir ; A. Mr. A. G. Murray, June 23, 441.*JAM FACTORIES—Overtime Employment of Women, etc., Order presented, *June 30, 1112, 1134.*

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London Government Bill, *Com.*, June 26, 578; June 27, 717, 727, 729, 730, 733, 734, 735, 744, 748, 749, 750, 754; *Rep.*, July 3, 1247.

Reformatory Schools Amendment Bill, 3R., June 22, 247.

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JAPAN—Trade Report presented, June 29, 944.

JEBB, MR. R. C. [Cambridge University]

Secondary Education—Board of Education Bill, 2R., June 26, 621.

JEFFREYS, MR. A. F. [Hampshire, N.]

Improvement of Land Bill, 2R., July 4, 1484.

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Fine or Imprisonment [Scotland and Ireland] Bill, 2R., June 22, 232.

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JESSEL, CAPT. H. M. [St. Pancras, S.]

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British Vice-Consul appointment

Q. Mr. Labouchere; A. Mr. Brodrick, June 23, 440.

Uitlanders' Grievances, *See* Transvaal.

JOHNSTON, MR. W. [Belfast, W.]

Agriculture and Technical Instruction [Ireland] Bill, June 28, 940; 2R., July 5, 1546.

Clogher Board of Guardians—Appointment of Miss Magill as Rate Collector, June 30, 1200.

Glebe Loan Borrowers, Ireland, June 30, 1190.

Tara, Ruins of—Illegal Excavation, June 20, 73.

JOHNSTONE, MR. J. H. [Sussex, Horsham]

Tax Districts, New Districts—Assistant Surveyors, etc., June 29, 985.

Tithe Rent-charge [Rates] Bill, 2R., June 29, 1052.

JOICEY, SIR J. [Durham, Chester-le-Street]

Telegraphs [Telephonic Communication, etc.] Bill, 2R., June 20, 117, 118, 121, 122, 127; *Com.*, June 28, 879.

JONES, MR. W. [Caernarvon, Arfon]

Pwllheli Boating Disaster, July 4, 1417.

Jones' Divorce Bill

c. 3R.* June 20, 39.

JORDAN, MR. J. [Fermanagh, S.]

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JOSEPH & THOMAS, WRECK OF—Croyde Coastguard Station and Telephonic Communication

Q. Sir C. Gull; A. Mr. Ritchie, June 27, 768.

JUDGES

Chancery Division—New Judge

Qs. Mr. Coghill, Mr. Cohen; As. Mr. A. J. Balfour, June 22, 288; Qs. Sir H. Fowler, Mr. MacNeill; As. Mr. A. J. Balfour, July 3, 1288.

Ecclesiastical Judge—Appointment of Sir A. Charles

Q. Mr. C. M'Arthur; A. Sir M. W. Ridley, June 29, 991.

JUDICIAL RENTS, *See* Land Commission, Ireland.

JURY PACKING IN IRELAND, ALLEGED, S., June 22, 319, 326, 330, 333, 341, 357.

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KAY-SHUTTLEWORTH, SIR U. [Lancashire, Clitheroe]

Kingscourt, Keady and Armagh Railway Bill, *Re-com.*, June 23, 407, 410, 411, 412.

KELVIN, LORD

Mail Steamer Contracts. June 26, 534.

KEMP, MR. E. J.—Kingswell Collision Case

Q. Lord Muskerry; A. Earl of Dudley, June 27, 754.

Kensington and Notting Hill Electric Lighting Bill

l. 3R.* June 29, 942.

c. Lords Amends. July 5, 1513.

KENYON, MR. J. [Lancashire, Bury]

Tithe Rent-charge [Rates] Bill, 2R., June 29, 1045.

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County Council—Food and Drugs Bills, Resolution

Q. Mr. Flavin; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, June 22, 287.

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Qs. Mr. Flavin; As. Mr. G. W. Balfour, June 20, 72; June 23, 450; June 26, 602; June 29, 998.

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Q. Mr. Flavin; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, June 23, 451.

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Training Cruiser in Tarbert Harbour, proposed
Q. Mr. Flavin; A. Mr. Gosehen, *June 20*, 60.

Kew Bridge Bill

l. Royal Assent, June 20, 2.

Kew Gardens Seats

Q. Mr. Weir; A. Mr. Akers-Douglas, *June 30*, 1149.

KEYHAM YARD, PLYMOUTH, Erection of Police Barracks—Workmen's Wages

Qs. Mr. Woods; As. Mr. A. Chamberlain, *June 20*, 61; *June 27*, 759.

KIEN-YANG—Alleged Murder of Missionaries

Q. Mr. H. Roberts; A. Mr. Brodrick, *June 20*, 64.

KILBRIDE, MR. D. [Galway, N.]

McHale v. Sullivan, *June 22*, 350.

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Grand Jury Secretary, Salary of
Q. Mr. P. O'Brien; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *June 26*, 605.

Postmen's Pay

Q. Mr. P. O'Brien; A. Mr. Hanbury, *July 3*, 1281.

KILLADROY LOAN FUND BANK

Q. Mr. Flavin; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *June 27*, 777.

KILLADYSERT JUDICIAL RENTS

Q. Mr. W. Redmond; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *July 3*, 1284.

KILLALOE AND CASTLECOMER RAILWAY FACILITIES

Q. Mr. Field; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *June 29*, 998.

KILLARNEY LAKES—Purchase of Herbert Estate, proposed, Grosvenor House meeting

Qs. Mr. Flavin; As. Mr. A. J. Balfour, *June 20*, 75; *June 23*, 456.

KILLARNEY UNION, DISTRESS IN—Relief Works

Q. Mr. J. P. Farrell; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *June 20*, 75.

KILMALLOCK JUDICIAL RENTS, DELAY IN FIXING

Q. Mr. P. O'Brien; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *July 3*, 1287.

KIMBER, MR. H. [Wandsworth]

Municipal Trading, *June 29*, 1000.

Telegraphs [Telephonic Communication, etc.] Bill, *July 3*, 1280; *Com.*, *June 23*, 695, 875, 876.

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Commons and Open Spaces Bill, 2R., *June 22*, 254.

Elementary Education [Defective and Epileptic Children] Bill, *Com.*, *June 29*, 1127.

Half-timers—Education of Children Bill, 2R., *June 30*, 1120.

Land Tenure in Wales, *June 23*, 388.

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Poor Law Acts Amendment Bill, 2R., *June 29*, 954, 955.

Summary Jurisdiction Act [1879] Amendment Bill, 2R., *June 29*, 951.

KING, SIR H. S. [Hull, Central]

India—Public Works Department, Officers' Retirement, *July 4*, 1410.

Kingscourt, Keady, and Armagh Railway Bill

c. Re-com., *June 23*, 401.

KINGSWELL-MARIA COLLISION—Malta Inquiry

Q. Lord Muskerry; A. Earl of Dudley, *June 27*, 754.

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Elementary Education [Defective and Epileptic Children] Bill, 2R., *June 23*, 398.

Kirkcaldy Corporation and Tramways Bill

c. Rep. June 30*, 1132.

KLEIN, DR., ATTACK ON—Roman Catholic University for Ireland, S., June 23, 481.**KNOCKNINNY POST OFFICE, REMOVAL OF**

Q. Mr. Jordan; A. Mr. Hanbury, *June 23*, 446.

KNUTSFORD, VISCOUNT

Half-timers—Education of Children Bill, 2R., *June 30*, 1112.

KOREA—Trade Report presented, July 3, 1231.**KOW SHING DISASTER**

Q. Col. Denny; A. Mr. Brodrick, *June 22*, 267; Q. Lord C. Beresford; A. Mr. Brodrick, *June 30*, 1142.

KRUGER, PRESIDENT, See Transvaal.**KURDISH OUTRAGES IN ARMENIA**

Q. Mr. Flynn; A. Mr. Brodrick, *July 4*, 1412.

KWEI-CHAN, Murder of British Missionary—Mr. Fleming

Q. Mr. J. H. Roberts; A. Mr. Brodrick, *July 3*, 1273.

June 20—July 5.

LABOUCHERE, MR. H. [Northampton]Cape Colony, Troops for, *June 23*, 436.Johannesburg—British Vice-Consul appointment, *June 23*, 440.Jury Packing in Ireland, *June 22*, 333."Parliamentary Debates"—Mr. Bussey's Bankruptcy, Payment to Reporters, etc., *June 22*, 276.Royal Niger Company—Transfer of Administration to Imperial Government, *July 3*, 1301, 1319, 1320, 1321.Telegraphs [Telephonic Communication etc.] Bill, 2R., *June 21*, 226; Com., *June 22*, 876, 877, 878, 879, 896.**LAMBERT, MR. G. [Devon, South Molton]**Sale of Food and Drugs Bill, *June 22*, 289.

Tithe Rent-charge [Rates] Bill

Rates paid by Owners of Tithes, *June 27*, 774; *July 4*, 1416.Transvaal—Uitlanders' Grievances, *June 27*, 763; *July 4*, 1412.**Lanarkshire [Middle Ward District] Water Bill**c. Con.* *June 23*, 400.3R.* *June 27*, 755.**LANCASHIRE SEA FISHERIES JOINT COMMITTEE, MERSEY FISHERIES—Limitations on Fishing on Burbo Bank**Q. Mr. Harwood; A. Mr. Ritchie, *June 29*, 980.**Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway [New Railways] Bill**l. Rep.* *June 23*, 371.3R.* *June 29*, 942.c. Lords Amends. *July 4*, 1402.**Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway [Various Powers] Bill**l. Rep.* *June 23*, 371.3R.* *June 29*, 942.c. Lords Amends. *July 4*, 1402.**LAND**Improvement of Land Bill, *See that Title*.
Roscommon Land Improvement Loans—InspectorQ. Mr. P. O'Brien; A. Mr. Hanbury, *July 3*, 1281.**LAND COMMISSION, IRELAND**

Butler Estate, Sale of — Inspection of Holdings, etc.

Q. Mr. P. O'Brien; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *June 29*, 996.

Cavan Land Cases, Delay in hearing

Q. Mr. J. P. Farrell; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *June 23*, 449.

Clare Co. Judicial Rents, Delay in fixing

Q. Mr. W. Redmond; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *July 3*, 1284.**LAND COMMISSION, IRELAND—cont.**

Ecclesiastical Lands, Rent payable to Commission

Q. Mr. O'Neill; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *June 30*, 1152.

Hassett's Estate, Valuation, etc.

Q. Mr. M. Healy; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *June 23*, 447.

Kerry, North, Judicial Rents

Qs. Mr. Flavin; As. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *June 20*, 72; *June 23*, 45; *June 26*, 602; *June 29*, 998.

Kilmallock Land Appeals

Q. Mr. P. O'Brien; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *July 3*, 1287.

Lay Tithe Rent-charge

Q. Mr. Hemphill; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *June 22*, 283.

Longford Sittings, Postponement of

Q. Mr. J. P. Farrell; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *June 23*, 449.

Nugent Estate, Sale of, Delay in

Q. Mr. Tuitt; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *June 29*, 997.**LAND JUDGES' COURT, IRELAND, WORK OF**Q. Mr. Flavin; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *June 22*, 282.**LAND ORDINANCES, CEYLON, *See Ceylon.*****LAND REGISTRY Account presented, *June 26*, 533, 587.****LAND REVENUE IN INDIA**Q. Sir H. H. Fowler; A. Lord G. Hamilton, *June 23*, 438.**LAND TENURE, WALES, *Debate [1.] June 23*, 374.****LAND TRANSFER, Rules presented, *July 3*, 1270; *July 4*, 1393.****LANESBOROUGH TELEGRAPHIC COMMUNICATION**Q. Mr. J. P. Farrell; A. Mr. Hanbury, *June 22*, 275.**LAURIE, LIEUT. - GEN. [Pembroke and Haverfordwest]**Army Recruits enlisted under Standard, *June 23*, 435.Militia Officers' Commissions, *June 29*, 968.**LAW CHARGES IN IRELAND, Vote for, *June 22*, 306.****LAW COURTS—Chancery Division, Appointment of Additional Judge.**Qs. Mr. Coghill, Mr. Cohen; As. Mr. A. J. Balfour, *June 22*, 288; Qs. Fowler, Mr. MacNeill; As. Mr. A. Balfour, *July 3*, 1288.

June 20—July 5.

LAW COURTS, MALTA—Proposed Abolition of Italian LanguageQ. Mr. Davitt ; A. Mr. J. Chamberlain, *July 3, 1276.***LAWRENCE, MR. W. F. [Liverpool, Abercromby]**Royal Niger Company—Transfer of Administration to Imperial Government, *July 3, 1306.*Telegraphs [Telegraphic Communication, etc.] Bill, 2R., *June 20, 157 ; Com., June 28, 886, 887.***LAWSON, MR. J. G. [York, N.R., Thirsk]**Carmarthen Charities, *June 20, 70.*Secondary Education—Board of Education Bill, 2R., *June 26, 638.*York Charities, Control of, *June 29, 981.***LAWSON, SIR W. [Cumberland, Cockermouth]**Licensing Exemption [Houses of Parliament] Bill, *June 26, 606.*Liquor, Sale of, in the Precincts of the House, *June 29, 993.*Tithe Rent-charge [Rates] Bill, *June 22, 368.***LEAD POISONING INQUEST, HANLEY—Manufacturers' Association Representation**Q. Sir C. Dilke ; A. Sir M. W. Ridley, *June 29, 990.***LECKY, MR. W. E. H. [Dublin University]**Records, Irish, Access to, *June 30, 1167.*Trinity College, Dublin, Engineering Degree—Qualification for Posts under Land Commission, etc., *June 20, 66.***Leeds Corporation Bill***c. Rep. from Select Com. June 22, 261.*3R.* *June 26, 582.*1. 1R.* *June 26, 531.*2R.* *June 27, 704.**Com.* July 3, 1229.***LEIGH, LORD**Reformatory Schools Amendment Bill, 3R., *June 22, 246.***Leith Harbour and Docks Bill***l. Rep. from Select Com. June 29, 942.***LENG, SIR J. [Dundee]**Carbolic Acid Poisoning—Restriction on Sale of Carbolic Acid, *June 23, 443.*Castle Moffat Camp, Abandonment of, *July 3, 1272.*Constabulary and Police, Scottish—Capt. Monro's Recommendations, *June 29, 988.*Invalid and Old Age Insurance Bill [Germany] Translation of, etc., *June 20, 63.*Military Works Expenditure, Scotland, *July 3, 1271.*Northern Lighthouse Commission—Nautical Adviser, *June 27, 767.***LENG, SIR J.—cont.**Patent Office, Surplus Revenue, *June 26, 590.*Postmen, Inspectors of—Substitutes, *June 23, 446.*Prison Rules, Scotch and English, *June 29, 988.*Private Legislation Procedure [Scotland] Bill, *June 23, 456 ; Com., June 20, 80, 99, 100.*Telegraphs [Telephonic Communication, etc.] Bill, *Com., June 28, 900.***LEWIS, ISLAND OF**

Port Ness Harbour Works

Q. Mr. Weir ; A. Mr. A. G. Murray, *July 3, 1283.*

Sgixda Rock Beacon

Q. Mr. Weir ; A. Mr. Ritchie, *July 4, 1413.*

Valtos Pier, Construction of—Grant in aid

Q. Mr. Weir ; A. Mr. A. G. Murray, *June 29, 987.*

Waste Lands—Cultivation by Fishermen, suggested

Q. Mr. Weir ; A. Mr. A. G. Murray, *June 20, 67.***LEWIS, MR. J. H. [Flint Boroughs]**Improvement of Land Bill, 2R., *July 4, 1481, 1482.*Rhyl, Public Meetings—Local Government Provisional Orders [No 14] Bill, *June 20, 47, 50.***LICENSING EXEMPTION [HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT] BILL**Q. Sir W. Lawson ; A. Mr. A. J. Balfour, *June 26, 606.***LICHFIELD, EARL OF**Isolation Hospitals [Amendment] Bill, *Com. June 22, 233.***LIFTS FOR PUBLIC BUILDINGS**Q. Sir J. W. Maclure ; A. Mr. Akers-Douglas, *July 4, 1423.***Light Load-line Bill***l. 2R., June 26, 534.***LIGHT RAILWAYS [IRELAND] ACT, ETC.,**
Vote for, *July 3, 1387.***LIGHTS AND LIGHTHOUSES**

Lizard Lights

Q. Mr. Field ; A. Mr. Ritchie, *July 4, 1415.*

Northern Lighthouse Commission—Nautical Adviser

Q. Sir J. Leng ; A. Mr. Ritchie, *27, 767.*

Scottish Congested Districts — Minor Lights

Qs. Mr. Weir ; As. Mr. A. G. Murray, *June 23, 442 ; July 3, 1284.*

Sgixda Rock Beacon

Q. Mr. Weir ; A. Mr. Ritchie, *July 4, 1413.*

June 20—July 5.

LIMERICK—Conduct of Constabulary
Q. Mr. T. M. Healy; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *June 22, 282.*

Lincoln and East Coast Railway and Dock Bill

l. 2R. June 22, 230.*

Lincolnshire Coroners Bill

c. 2R. June 22, 368.*

Com. June 23, 527.*

LIQUOR TRAFFIC AND LIQUOR LICENSING LAWS

Africa, West, Spirit Duties

Q. Mr. C. M'Arthur; A. Mr. J. Chamberlain, *June 20, 65*; Q. Sir M. Stewart; A. Mr. J. Chamberlain, *June 29, 978.*

Army Temperance Association — New Barracks Accommodation

Q. Mr. Hedderwick; A. Mr. Wyndham, *June 29, 971.*

Houses of Parliament—Sale of Liquor in the Precincts of the House

Q. Sir W. Lawson; A. Viscount Valentia, *June 29, 993.*

Irish Post Offices on Licensed Premises—Return

Q. Mr. Pinkerton; A. Mr. Hanbury, *June 22, 274.*

Licensing Exemption [Houses of Parliament] Bill, See that Title.

Recruiting in Public-houses—Regulations

Q. Mr. Souttar; A. Mr. Wyndham, *June 22, 264.*

Royal Commission, Report, etc., presented

July 4, 1392, 1404.

Scotland, Increase in Drunkenness

Qs. Mr. Pirie, Dr. Clark; As. Mr. A. J. Balfour, *June 27, 779*; Q. Mr. Pirie; A. Mr. A. G. Murray, *June 29, 988.*

Sunday Sale, See Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill.

LISTOWEL SUB-COMMISSION SITTINGS

Qs. Mr. Flavin; As. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *June 20, 72*; *June 23, 450*; *June 26, 602*; *June 29, 998.*

Liverpool Overhead Railway Bill

c. Con. July 3, 1265.*

LIVERPOOL POST OFFICE STAFF

Q. Mr. C. M'Arthur; A. Mr. Hanbury, *June 22, 273.*

LIZARD LIGHTS

Q. Mr. Field; A. Mr. Ritchie, *July 4, 1415.*

LLOYD-GEORGE, MR. D. [Carnarvon, etc.]

Rhyl, Public Meetings—Local Government Provisional Orders [No. 14] Bill, *June 20, 40, 44, 46*; *June 23, 414, 417, 423, 431.*

Tithe Rent-charge [Rates] Bill, 2R., June 29, 1066, 1068, 1071.

LOAD LINES, See Light Load-line Bill.

LOAN FUND BANK, KILLADROY

Q. Mr. Flavin; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *June 27, 777.*

LOAN FUND SOCIETY, EDGEWORTHSTOWN—Compensation to Debenture-holders

Q. Mr. J. P. Farrell; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *June 20, 74.*

LOANS

Colonial Loans Fund Bill, See that Title.

Glebe Loan Borrowers, Ireland, S., June 30, 1184.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES, SCOTLAND—Technical Education, Return ordered [Mr. A. G. Murray], June 23, 434.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BILL

Petition for Amendment, July 3, 1232.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD, IRELAND

Local Government Act, Working of, S., June 30, 1222.

Management of Local Affairs, S., June 30, 1198.

Vote for, June 22, 358; June 30, 1194.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE, IRELAND—Increase in Labour and Expense under New Rules

Q. Mr. J. P. Farrell; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *June 20, 74*; Q. Mr. T. M. Healy; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *June 22, 280.*

Local Government [Ireland] Provisional Orders [No. 1] Bill

l. 2R. June 27, 705.*

Rep. July 3, 1231.*

3R. July 4, 1391.*

Local Government [Ireland] Provisional Orders [No. 2] Bill

l. 1R. June 20, 6.*

2R. June 27, 705.*

Rep. July 3, 1231.*

3R. July 4, 1391.*

Local Government [Ireland] Provisional Orders [No. 3] Bill

l. 1R. June 20, 6.*

2R. June 27, 705.*

Rep. July 3, 1231.*

3R. July 4, 1391.*

Local Government [Ireland] Provisional Order [No. 4] Bill

c. Rep. June 23, 431.*

3R. June 26, 584.*

l. 1R. June 26, 529.*

2R. June 27, 705.*

Com. July 3, 1230.*

June 20—July 5.

Local Government [Ireland] Provisional Orders [Housing of the Working Classes [No. 2] Bill

- c. Rep.* June 20, 56.*
- 3R.* June 21, 161.*
- l. 1R.* June 22, 231.*
- 2R.* June 27, 705.*
- Com.* June 29, 943.*
- Rep.* July 3, 1231.*
- 3R.* July 4, 1391.*

Local Government Provisional Orders [No. 2] Bill

- c. 3R.* June 20, 55.*
- l. 1R.* June 22, 231.*
- 2R.* June 27, 704.*
- Com.* June 29, 943; July 3, 1230.*
- 3R.* July 4, 1391.*

Local Government Provisional Orders [No. 3] Bill

- l. 2R.* June 22, 231.*
- Com.* June 23, 373.*
- 3R.* June 26, 531.*

Local Government Provisional Orders [No. 4] Bill

- c. Rep.* June 21, 228.*
- Con.* June 22, 260.*
- 3R.* June 23, 414.*
- l. 1R.* June 23, 371.*
- 2R.* June 27, 704.*
- Com.* June 30, 1110.*

Local Government Provisional Orders [No. 5] Bill

- l. 2R.* June 27, 704.*
- Com.* July 3, 1230.*
- 3R.* July 4, 1391.*

Local Government Provisional Orders [No. 6] Bill

- c. Rep.* June 21, 162; June 28, 937.*
- 3R.* June 29, 964.*
- l. 1R.* June 29, 944.*

Local Government Provisional Orders [No. 7] Bill

- c. 3R.* June 20, 55.*
- l. 1R.* June 22, 231.*
- 2R.* June 27, 704.*
- Com.* June 29, 943; July 3, 1230.*
- 3R.* July 4, 1391.*

Local Government Provisional Orders [No. 8] Bill

- l. 2R.* June 27, 704.*
- Com.* July 3, 1230.*
- 3R.* July 4, 1391.*

Local Government Provisional Orders [No. 9] Bill

- c. Rep.* June 20, 56.*
- Con.* June 21, 161.*
- 3R.* June 22, 259.*
- l. 1R.* June 22, 231.*
- 2R.* June 27, 705.*
- Com.* June 29, 943.*

Local Government Provisional Orders [No. 10] Bill

- c. Com., Attendance of F. Steevens ordered, June 21, 161, 260.*
- Rep.* June 30, 1131.*
- 3R.* July 3, 1267.*
- l. 1R.* July 3, 1231.*

Local Government Provisional Orders [No. 11] Bill

- c. Rep.* June 20, 56.*
- Con.* June 21, 161.*
- 3R.* June 22, 259.*
- l. 1R.* June 22, 231.*
- 2R.* June 27, 705.*
- Com.* June 29, 943.*
- Rep.* July 3, 1231.*
- 3R.* July 4, 1391.*

Local Government Provisional Orders [No. 12] Bill

- c. Rep.* June 23, 431.*
- 3R.* June 26, 584.*
- l. 1R.* June 26, 529.*
- 2R.* June 27, 705.*
- Com.* July 3, 1230.*

Local Government Provisional Orders [No. 14] Bill

- l. 1R.* June 27, 706.*
- c. 3R.* June 27, 756.*

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS [No. 14] BILL

- Division into two Bills, *Motion* [Mr. T. W. Russell], *June 26, 585.*
- Motions* [Mr. Lloyd-George], *June 20, 40; June 23, 414.*

Local Government Provisional Orders [No. 15] Bill

- c. Order for Re-com. discharged, etc., June 27, 756.*

Local Government Provisional Orders [Gas] Bill

- c. Rep.* June 20, 56.*
- Con.* June 21, 161.*
- 3R.* June 22, 259.*
- l. 1R.* June 22, 231.*
- 2R.* June 27, 704.*
- Com.* June 29, 943.*
- Rep.* July 3, 1231.*
- 3R.* July 4, 1391.*

Local Government Provisional Order [Housing of the Working Classes] Bill

- l. 2R.* June 27, 704.*
- Rep.* July 3, 1231.*
- 3R.* July 4, 1391.*

Local Government Provisional Orders [Poor Law] Bill

- l. 2R.* June 27, 704.*
- Rep.* July 3, 1231.*
- 3R.* July 4, 1391.*

June 20—July 5.

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT [SCOTLAND] ACT [1894]
AMENDMENT BILL***Petitions, June 27, 757; July 4, 1403.***LOCAL TAXATION GRANT—TITHE RENT-
CHARGE [RATES] BILL***Q. Mr. Strachey; A. Mr. Long, June 29, 991.***LOCKWOOD, COL. A. [Essex, Epping]***Secondary Education—Board of Education Bill, 2R., June 26, 652.***LOGAN, MR. [Leicester, Harborough]***Royal Niger Company—Transfer of Administration to Imperial Government, July 3, 1323.**Vaccination—Public Vaccinator's visits, July 3, 1279.***LOHAR AND RINNEEN FISHERIES, Boat Pier
proposed***Q. Mr. Flavin; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, June 26, 602.***LONDON CHARITABLE ENDOWMENTS, Return
presented, June 29, 966.****London, Chatham, and Dover Railway
Bill***l. Rep.* June 22, 229.**3R.* June 30, 1110.***LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL, Return presented,
June 20, 7.****London County Council [General Powers]
Bill***c. Rep.* June 20, 57.**3R.* June 26, 582.**l. 1R.* June 26, 531.**2R.* June 27, 704.***London County Council [Money] Bill***c. 3R.* June 20, 39.**l. 1R.* June 20, 4.**2R.* June 27, 703.***London Government Bill***l. 2R., June 20, 7.**Com., June 26, 537; June 27, 707.**Rep., July 3, 1233.**3R., July 4, 1394.***LONDON GOVERNMENT BILL***Petitions for Amendment, June 23, 373
June 26, 533; June 27, 707.**Women, Qualification of, Earl of Dun-
raven's Amendt., June 26, 537.***London Hospital Bill***l. Royal Assent, June 20, 2.***London Improvements Bill***l. 2R.* June 22, 230.***LONDON, PORT OF, BONDED VAULTS AND
WAREHOUSES—Overtime charges***Q. Mr. Steadman; A. Mr. Hanbury,
June 27, 769.***LONDON SCHOOL BOARD, BETHNAL GREEN
SCHOOLS, See Bethnal Green.****London United Tramways Bill***c. Rep.* June 23, 432.**3R.* June 26, 583.**l. 2R.* July 4, 1390.***London, Walthamstow, and Epping Forest
Railway Bill,***formerly***LONDON, WALTHAMSTOW AND EPPING
FOREST RAILWAY [No. 2] BILL***c. Rep.* June 20, 57.**3R.* June 23, 400.**l. 1R.* June 23, 372.***London and North Western Railway
[Additional Powers] Bill***l. 2R.* June 27, 703.***London and North Western Railway
[New Railways] Bill***l. 2R.* June 27, 703.***London and South Eastern Railway Bill***l. Rep. from Select Com., July 4, 1390.***LONDONDERRY—History and Ordnance Survey,
Publication of, etc.***Q. Mr. Tuite; A. Mr. Hanbury, June 29,
982.***LONDONDERRY, MARQUESS OF***London Government Bill, Com.—Qualifica-
tion of Women, June 26, 559.***LONG, RT. HON. W. H.—President of Board
of Agriculture [Liverpool, West Derby]***Grove Hill, Detention of—Board of Trade
Regulations in Scottish Ports, June 26,
591.**Improvement of Land Bill, 2R., July 4,
1481, 1485, 1486, 1489, 1491.**J. W. Taylor, s.s., Cattle Losses—Convey-
ance of Animals prohibited, July 4, 1415.**Patent Office Revenue, Surplus, June 26,
590.**Tithe Rent-charge [Rates] Bill, June 26,
591; June 27, 774; June 29, 991; June
30, 1145; July 3, 1280; July 4, 1416;
1R., June 22, 289; 2R., June 27, 793, 798,
799, 816; June 29, 1016, 1029, 1030.***LONGFORD, LAND COMMISSION SITTINGS***Q. Mr. J. P. Farrell; A. Mr. G. W. Bal-
four, June 23, 449.***LORD LIEUTENANT'S HOUSEHOLD, IRELAND,
Vote for, June 30, 1157; July 3, 1387.****LOSS OF LIFE AT SEA, Return presented, June
21, 163.**

June 20—July 5.

- LOUGH, MR. T.** [Islington, W.]
Telegraphs [Telephonic Communication, etc.] Bill, *Com.*, June 28, 888, 889.
- LOUGH ERNE DRAINAGE CHARGES**
Q. Mr. J. P. Farrell; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, June 20, 73.
- LOUTH COUNTY COUNCIL, Contractors as Councillors—Carlingford Member**
Q. Mr. T. M. Healy; A. Mr. Atkinson, June 22, 277.
- LOWE, MR. F. W.** [Birmingham, Edgbaston]
Tithe Rent-charge [Rates] Bill, 2R., June 29, 1072.
- Lowestoft Promenade Pier Bill**
1. 2R.* June 27, 703.
- Lowestoft Water and Gas Bill**
c. Rep.* June 30, 1132.
- LOWLES, MR. J.** [Shoreditch, Haggerston]
Small Houses [Acquisition of Ownership] Bill, *Con.*, June 28, 908, 916, 917.
- LOWTHER, RT. HON. J.** [Kent, Thanet]
Business of the House, July 3, 1289.
Harrigan, Bridget, Case of, June 22, 279.
Ramsay, Public Meetings—Local Government Provisional Orders [No. 14] Bill, June 22, 259.
Rhyl, Public Meetings—Local Government Provisional Orders [No. 14] Bill, June 20, 48; June 23, 420.
Undersized Fish Bill, July 3, 1278.
- LOWTHER, RT. HON. J. W.**—*Chairman of Committees* [Cumberland, Penrith]
Board of Education [Salaries], July 4, 1464, 1465, 1466, 1467, 1468.
Kingscourt, Keady and Armagh Railway Bill, *Re-com.*, June 23, 412.
Military Works [Money], June 21, 194, 201, 215, 217, 218.
Newcastle-upon-Tyne Tramways and Improvement Bill, July 3, 1266.
Private Legislation Procedure [Scotland] Bill, *Com.*, June 20, 99.
Royal Niger Company—Transfer of Administration to Imperial Government, July 3, 1307, 1308, 1309.
- LOYD, MR. A. K.** [Berks, Abingdon]
Improvement of Land Bill, 2R., July 4, 1488.
Tithe Rent-charge [Rates] Bill, 2R., June 27, 835.
- LUBBOCK, SIR J.** [London University]
Secondary Education—Board of Education Bill, 2R., June 26, 680.
Telegraphs [Telephonic Communication, etc.] Bill, 2R., June 20, 135, 147; June 21, 226; *Com.*, June 28, 878, 881, 883, 884.
National Telephone Company's Circular—Alleged breach of Parliamentary usage, June 26, 612.
- LUCAS-SHADWELL, MR. W.** [Hastings]
Postmen's Good Conduct Stripes, June 27, 769.
- LUNACY, Report presented, June 29, 945, 965.**
- LUNACY BILL**
Q. Dr. Farquharson; A. Mr. A. J. Balfour, June 23, 455.
- LYMPH, Supply of Glycerinated Calf Lymph, for Ireland**
Q. Sir T. Esmonde; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, June 29, 996.
- MACALEESE, MR. D.** [Monaghan, N.]
Agriculture and Technical Instruction [Ireland] Bill, July 3, 1286.
Aughnacloy Dispensary District, June 22, 288; June 23, 454; June 29, 994.
Belfast Harbour, Unprotected condition of, July 3, 1286.
Belfast Post Office Staff, Vacancies, June 26, 599.
Carrickroe Postal Arrangements, June 29, 983.
Constabulary, Royal Irish, Vacancies, June 30, 1153.
Dundalk Postmaster, Appointment of, June 29, 982.
National School Teachers, Ireland, Promotion of, June 30, 1150.
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Finegan Eviction Case, June 22, 283.
Postmen's Salary, June 29, 986.
Workhouse Hospitals, Medicines, etc., June 30, 1151.
- MACIVER, MR. D.** [Liverpool, Kirkdale]
Telegraphs [Telephonic Communication, etc.] Bill, *Com.*, June 27, 70.
- MACLEAN, MR. J. M.** [Cardiff]
Bloemfontein Conference, Further negotiations with President Kruger, June 29, 976.
Hofmeyr, Mr., and the Uitlanders' Grievances, June 29, 976.
- MACLURE, SIR J. W.** [Lancashire, Stretford]
Lifts for Public Buildings, July 4, 1423.
Presbyterian Clergy—Poor Rates, July 4, 1419.
Pwllheli Boating Disaster, July 4, 1417.
- MACNEILL, MR. J. G. S.** [Donegal, S.]
Army Headquarters Administration—Report, June 22, 265.
Bundoran Waterworks, June 22, 286; June 30, 1219.
Burmese Woman, Outrage on, by British Soldiers, at Rangoon, June 22, 266.
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Q. Mr. Buxton; *A. Sir M. Hicks-Beach, June 30*, 1144.**Royal Niger Company Bill***c. 1R.* July 4*, 1512.**RUSSELL, EARL**London Government Bill, *2R.*, *June 20*, 38; *Com.*, *June 27*, 721, 733.**RUSSELL, GEN. F. S. [Cheltenham]**Aberdeen Cemetery Scandal, *June 30*, 1146.

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Q. Mr. Seton-Karr; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *June 26*, 603.

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Qs. Mr. Hogan; As. Mr. Brodrick, *June 20*, 63; *June 23*, 441.

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Secretary for Scotland—Lord Balfour of Burleigh.

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Q. Gen. Russell; A. Mr. A. G. Murray, *June 30*, 1146.

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Q. Sir J. Leng; A. Mr. Wyndham, *July 3*, 1272.

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Q. Mr. Pirie; A. Mr. A. G. Murray, *June 26*, 598; Q. Mr. Pirie; A. Mr. Hanbury, *June 29*, 984.

Clyde Mussel Beds—Scotch Fishery Board's Rights

Q. Mr. Weir; A. Mr. Ritchie, *July 3*, 1277.

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Q. Sir J. Leng; A. Mr. A. G. Murray, *June 29*, 988.

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Q. Mr. Pirie; A. Mr. A. G. Murray, *June 29*, 989.

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Dingwall—Petition for Establishment of Depot for Seaforth Highlanders

Q. Mr. Hedderwick; A. Mr. Wyndham, *June 29*, 971.

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Q. Mr. Weir; A. Mr. Hanbury, *June 29*, 983.

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Qs. Mr. Pirie, Dr. Clark; As. Mr. A. J. Balfour, *June 27*, 779; Q. Mr. Pirie; A. Mr. A. G. Murray, *June 29*, 988.

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Duke Street Prison, Glasgow, Hospital Accommodation—Case of Mary Carroll
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Q. Mr. Weir; A. Mr. A. G. Murray, *June 23, 441.*

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Peddieston Public School, etc., Water Supply
Q. Mr. Weir; A. Mr. A. G. Murray, *June 27, 766.*

Port Ness Harbour Works
Q. Mr. Weir; A. Mr. A. G. Murray, *July 3, 1283.*

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Q. Mr. Weir; A. Mr. A. G. Murray, *June 27, 766.*

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- SEELY, MR. C. H. [Lincoln]
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- SITTINGS AND ADJOURNMENTS OF THE HOUSE—Suspension of Twelve o'Clock Rule, *Notice of Motion* [Sir W. Walrond] *June 28*, 938; *Motion* [Mr. A. J. Balfour] *June 29*, 1002.
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- SMITH, MR. S. [Flintshire]
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Q. Mr. F. Begg; A. Mr. Hanbury, *June 26*, 607; *Debate [c.]*, 608.Petition, *June 20*, 59.**TEMPERANCE ASSOCIATION, ARMY—New Barracks Accommodation**Q. Mr. Hedderwick; A. Mr. Wyndham, *June 29*, 971.**TENNANT, MR. H. J. [Berwickshire]**“Parliamentary Debates”—Bussy Bankruptcy, Reporters' Pay Arrears, etc., *July 4*, 1422.**TENURE OF HOUSES ABROAD, Report**Q. Mr. Field; A. Mr. Brodrick, *July 4*, 1412.**TENURE OF LAND, WALES, Debate [L.], June 23, 374.****TEYNHAM, LORD**London Government Bill, Com., *June 27*, 751, 752.**THANET, ISLE OF, PUBLIC MEETINGS, See Local Government Provisional Orders [No. 14] Bill.****THOMAS, MR. A. [Glamorganshire, E.]**Tithe Rent-charge [Rates] Bill, 2R., *June 27*, 853.**THOMPSON, SIR H. M., See Meysey-Thompson.****THORBURN, MR. W. [Peebles and Selkirk]**Private Legislation Procedure [Scotland] Bill, Com., *June 20*, 81.**THRING, LORD**London Government Bill, Com., *June 27*, 719, 743.**TINTERN ABBEY—Purchase by the Crown**Q. Mr. Flavin; A. Sir M. Hicks-Beach, *June 27*, 764.**TITHE RENT-CHARGE, IRELAND**

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Q. Mr. Lambert; A. Mr. Long, *June 27*, 774; Q. Mr. S. Evans; A. Mr. Long, *June 27*, 776; Q. Mr. McKenna; A. Mr. Long, *June 30*, 1145; Q. Mr. Lambert; A. Mr. Long, *July 4*, 1416.

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Memorandum presented, *June 27*, 758.

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Tramways Orders Confirmation [No. 3] Bill

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3R.* *June 30*, 1111.

c. 1R.* *July 3*, 1268.

TRAMWAYS ORDERS CONFIRMATION [No. 3] BILL

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Qs. Mr. H. S. Foster, Mr. J. E. Ellis; *As.* Mr. J. Chamberlain, *July 3*, 1274.

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Qs. Sir J. Brunner, Mr. J. E. Ellis; *As.* Mr. J. Chamberlain, *July 4*, 1413.

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Q. Mr. Macaleese; A. Mr. G. W. Balfour, *June 30*, 1151.Trained Nurses, *S.*, *June 30*, 1222, 1224.**Workington Corporation Bill**l. 3R.* *June 30*, 1109.c. 1R.* *July 3*, 1289.**WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION ACT AND AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS**Qs. Mr. Seely, Major Rasch; As. Mr. A. J. Balfour, *July 3*, 1287.**WORKMEN'S DWELLINGS**

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